AEGIS

VideoTitler ™

User's Guide

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AEGIS
DEVELOPMENT

This book and program are lovingly dedicated to my mother, Dorthy Reta Raisor Bonham, who passed away on October 9, 1987, without whom none of this would have been possible.

—Gary Bonham

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The most common use for graphic computers in video today is title creation. Titling devices range from simple dedicated character generators for the hobbyist to very expensive, high-performance graphics and animation systems. Until recently there was no middle ground in cost and performance between these two. The Amiga has entered that arena. It provides a means to produce quality graphics at an affordable price. This is an important advance in the desktop video revolution.

The Aegis Videotitler system was designed with all of these things in mind. You'll find it pushes the Amiga to its limits and provides an amazing amount of power and flexibility in video or presentation titling.

With at least one megabyte of memory, you can:

- Create titles in low resolution (320x200) or video resolution (320X400), with overscan. The most severe overscan possible on the Amiga is available to eliminate any hint of a border around the screen.

- Use any font that uses the Amiga font format.

- Use poly fonts, created especially for VideoTitler, which you can mirror, skew, size and distort.

AEGIS VIDEOTITLER

- Use colorfonts created with "The Calligrapher," a product of InterActive Softworks.

- Choose from 20 different styles to create a desired effect for any font. Or create your own styles in "Expert Mode."

- Have full control over text shadows and 3-D backdrops: change the depth and direction, and more.

- Use IFF pictures, windows, and brushes as backdrops and fills for your titles.

- Save your work in the IFF format for use in paint and animation programs or Aegis VideoSEG, the animated slideshow included with VideoTitler.

- Use the "clipboard" to clip IFF images and color gradations. Use the "paste frame" to size and distort the image before pasting it. This way, you can simulate AD0 effects (turning the picture in three dimensions) by recording a paste sequence in an animation.

- Create your own color palette with the HAM (hold and modify) color requester, which displays all 4,096 colors on the screen at once.

- Use the Amiga's halfbrite capability to double the color palette.

- Run the program on either the NTSC or PAL Amiga and create titles in either format.

  With at least one and a half megabytes of memory, you can:

- Create titles in medium resolution (640x200) or high resolution (640x400), with overscan.

- Create animations with your titles using the Aegis/Sparta ANIM format.

SECTION 1 | GETTING STARTED

CHAPTER 1 FOR BEGINNERS

What You Need to Run VideoTitler

VideoTitler will run on any of the Amiga family of computers with minimum requirements of one megabyte of memory (RAM) and two disk drives. Kickstart and Workbench versions 1.2 (or greater) are required.

Making a Backup

You should use a backup of VideoTitler and put the original away. This is your insurance in case of disk damage.

To make a backup:

■ Insert Workbench 1.2 in the disk drive.

- Insert a blank, double-sided disk in the external drive. You may see **DF1:BAD**, but this simply means the disk isn't formatted — proceed to the next step.

- Use the mouse to place the cursor on the **Workbench** disk symbol.

- While holding down the Selection (left) mouse button, drag the **Workbench** disk symbol to cover the **DF1:** disk symbol and release the Selection button. A requestor will appear saying **Put FROM disk in drive DF0:**.

- Remove the Workbench disk and insert the VideoTitler program disk.

- Use the mouse to place the cursor on the **Continue** button.

- Click the Selection (left) mouse button. The Disk Copy process will begin.

  Note: Never remove a disk while the drive light is on.

Loading VideoTitler

To start VideoTitler from the Workbench:

- Insert the program disk in the internal drive and the data disk in the external drive after you have loaded Kickstart 1.2. VideoTitler's Workbench screen will appear.

  Note: The Amiga 500 and 2000 don't require a Kickstart disk.

- Double-click with the Selection (left) mouse button on the **VideoTitler** disk symbol. A window will appear containing more symbols.

- Double-click with the Selection (left) mouse button on the **VideoTitler** symbol. After a half minute or so, the VideoTitler program will appear on the screen.

  You can run VideoTitler from the CLI (Command Line Interpreter, described in the handbook accompanying your Amiga).

To start VideoTitler from the CLI:

- At the CLI prompt, type **Titler**. You may also follow this with a space and the name of a settings file (described in Chapter 8, "The Project Menu"). If VideoTitler can't find that settings file, it will use the file .**titler**, found in the devs directory.

To access the Workbench or CLI after starting VideoTitler:

- Hold down the left Amiga key and press the N key. You will be returned to the Workbench screen (or the CLI if you started VideoTitler from there).

- Hold down the left Amiga key and press the M key to return to the VideoTitler screen.

Using the Mouse

The Amiga Mouse performs three general tasks: "choosing," "selecting," and "dragging."

Choosing

The right mouse button is called the Menu button. You use it to choose items from the Menu Bar. You can see the Menu Bar in VideoTitler when you press the Menu button. To choose a menu item, put the cursor on a menu heading and move it down until the item you want is highlighted. Release the Menu button and that item is chosen.

Many menu items in VideoTitler have submenus. For example, the **Open** item in the **Project** menu has a submenu consisting of five items: **Picture**, **Window**, and so on. To choose a submenu item, move the cursor over until the item is highlighted. Release the Menu button and that item is chosen.

Selecting

The left mouse button is called the Selection button. One of its uses is to "select" items such as buttons and arrows. For example, to select a button, put the cursor on it and click the Selection button.

Dragging

The Selection button is also used to "drag" items, such as icons (symbols) on the Workbench and text in VideoTitler. To move an item to a new place, put the cursor on it and move the item while holding down the Selection button.

Keyboard Commands

Many of the menu items can be chosen when you press certain keys or combinations of keys. Some functions are only available through keyboard commands. A keyboard combination consists of a key, or several keys that you are to hold down while you press another key. The commands are often represented in the manual like this:

SHIFT CTRL G

This means "while holding down the SHIFT and CTRL keys, press the G key." Here's another way to represent this command: SHIFT-CTRL-G.

CHAPTER 2 TUTORIAL

When you start up VideoTitler, the **About VideoTitler** requestor is the first thing you'll see. It contains the version number and copyright information, and it also keeps track of how much memory is available — the more you have, the more you can do. Press any key to put the requestor away. Now you can start entering some eye-catching titles.

- Use the mouse to place the cursor (the little crosshairs) at about the center of the screen.

- Click the Selection (left) mouse button. A set of large, white crosshairs will appear. They mark where the text will appear when you start typing.

- Press the CAPS LOCK key and type your name — use the BACK SPACE key to erase mistakes. A small, vertical line will move along as you type, marking where the next letter will appear.

The "font," which is a set of characters of one size and style, is Topaz 9 point. This is a standard font you'll find in other Amiga

programs; but, for our purposes, it's a little too small, so let's change it.

■ Press this key:

F6

The **Amiga Font Select** requestor will appear, listing different fonts in different sizes.

■ Place the cursor on the box containing **diamond....20**, and select it by clicking the Selection (left) mouse button. The box will become highlighted in blue.

■ Place the cursor on the close box in the upper left corner and select it by clicking the Selection (left) mouse button. The requestor will close and your text will appear in the font you choose.

Let's place what we've typed so far.

■ Click on any part of the crosshairs with the Selection (left) mouse button, and while holding the button down, use the mouse to move the crosshairs up to about the top third of the screen — this is the "drag" technique. The text will snap to the new position as soon as you release the button (see Figure 2.1).

Now we'll center the crosshairs horizontally.

■ While holding down the SHIFT and ALT keys, press either the up arrow or the down arrow. From now on, this type of key combination will be represented this way:
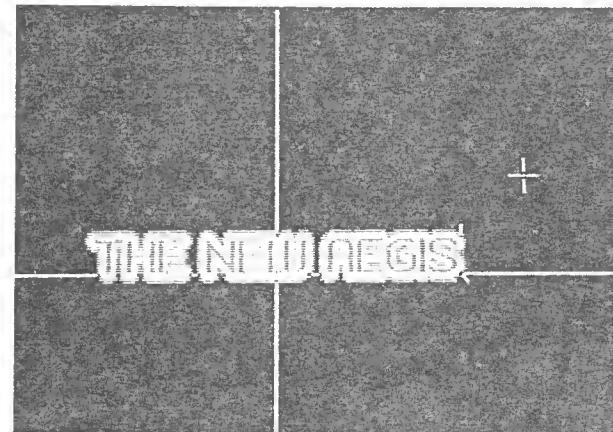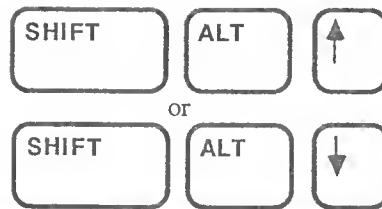

Figure 2.1   The First Line.

We need to turn off the crosshairs so that we can turn them on again for another line of text.

■ Click the Menu (right) mouse button to turn off the crosshairs.

■ Click in about the center of the screen with the Selection (left) mouse button. The crosshairs will appear again.

■ Turn off the CAPS LOCK key and type "presents."

■ Make sure the text is centered by pressing either of these key combinations:

[SHIFT] [ALT] [↑]

or

[SHIFT] [ALT] [↓]
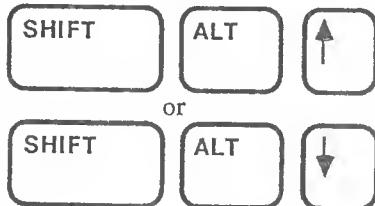
Now we're going to enter a new type of font, called a "poly font," which was created especially for VideoTitler. But first, we must turn off the crosshairs.

■ Click the Menu (right) mouse button.

■ While holding down the SHIFT key, click the Selection (left) mouse button. A skinny, white rectangle will appear. This is the cursor for entering poly-font text.

■ Press the CAPS LOCK key and type "DESKTOP VIDEO" — use the BACK SPACE key to erase mistakes.

■ Center the text with either of these key combinations, to make sure you can see the whole line:

[ALT] [↑] or [ALT] [↓]

Poly fonts are unique because you can stretch or compress them into different sizes and shapes. Let's make the text bigger.

■ Click in the middle of the top white line with the Selection (left) mouse button. While holding it down, drag the line about an inch up the screen to make the text taller.

■ Now click in the middle of the right white line with the Selection (left) mouse button. Drag the line to the right to make the text longer. Repeat for the left white line.

■ Click on the lower left corner of the rectangle with the Selection (left) mouse button. Drag the rectangle up the screen to place the text at an angle — don't worry about covering the other text.

■ Click in the very center of the rectangle with the Selection (left) mouse button. Drag the rectangle down to uncover any text.

■ Click the Menu (right) mouse button to turn off the poly-font cursor.

The Text Styles feature contains twenty ready-made styles which you can apply to any kind of text to "jazz" it up. But first, we must select a line of text before we can apply a style to it.

■ Click in the very center of your name with the Selection button. You'll know it's selected when the little white cursor on the crosshairs is at the end of the text. If it's not, click the Menu (right) mouse button and try again.

■ Press this key to bring up the Text Styles requestor:

[F10]

■ Click on Thin Neon with the Selection button to select it. The box will become highlighted in blue.

■ Put the requestor away by selecting the close box in the upper left corner. Your name will appear as if it were outlined in neon.

■ Click the Menu (right) mouse button to turn off the crosshairs.

We can apply a different style to the next line of text.

■ Click in the very center of "presents" to select it and press the F10 key to bring up the **Text Styles** requestor.

■ Select **Offset Edge** and then select the close box. The text be surrounded with a blue outline.

■ Click the Menu (right) mouse button to turn off the crosshairs.

Let's give "DESKTOP VIDEO" the most spectacular style of all.

■ Click in the very center of "DESKTOP VIDEO" to select it. The poly-font cursor will appear, enclosing the text.

■ Press the F10 key to bring up the **Text Styles** requestor and select **Large Star**.

■ Select the close box to close the requestor, and click the Menu (right) button to turn off the poly-font cursor. Voilà! You have created your first desktop-video title screen (see Figure 2.2).
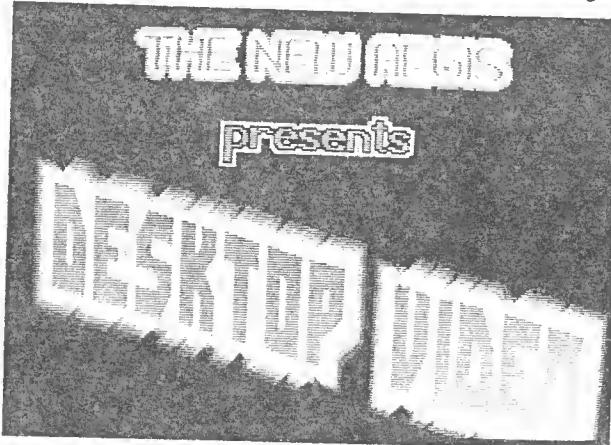
Figure 2.2   The Finished Product.

This is just a small sample of what you and VideoTitler are capable of. You can put pictures in the background, create an animation, and more. Then you can assemble everything in VideoSEG to play back in a slide show.

When you're done admiring your work, you can choose **Quit** from the **Project** menu to exit the program. The Workbench screen will appear. From there you can eject the disk and turn off the computer.

SECTION 2 | THE FOREGROUND

CHAPTER 3 | AN INTRODUCTION TO VIDEOTITLER TEXT

The Foreground

When you enter text, it appears in the "foreground," where you can go back and edit it at any time. This section of the manual covers all the things you can do to text while it's still in the foreground. The elaborate cut-and-paste effects, as shown in the screen shot of the Aegis logo on the back of the box, are only available after text is "stamped" to the background. This information is covered in Section 3, "The Background."

Note: Before you try the techniques in the following sections, make sure that Lo-res is checked in the Screen submenu of the Display menu - choose it from the menu if it isn't. This way, you'll get faster results as you try out VideoTitler's features.

Fonts

The word "font" is a printers' term which refers to the style and size of type. VideoTitler has a large selection of styles

(typefaces) in different sizes. For example, the Ruby style is available in heights ranging from 8 to 15 points. (This translates to a range of .11 to .66 inches since there are 72 points to the inch.) Each set of type of one size and style is a different font.

VideoTitler has two categories of fonts: Amiga fonts and "poly fonts." Amiga fonts are "bitmap" fonts used in other programs such as word processors. They include fonts created by other programs, including font libraries published by Zuma and ColorFonts (made with Interactive Softworks' "The Calligrapher").

Poly fonts, which were created especially for VideoTitler, can be resized and distorted. Even though Amiga fonts and poly fonts are manipulated a little differently, they are subject to the same **Style** commands and many of the same keyboard commands.

CHAPTER 4
THE TEXT MENU: AMIGA FONTS

Entering Amiga Text

You can enter Amiga text on the screen after you turn on a set of crosshairs, which are for positioning the text.

To bring up the Amiga-font crosshairs:

- Either choose **Entry** from the **Text** menu or click anywhere on the screen with the Selection button. The crosshairs will appear. The cursor marks the position of the next letter.

- Drag the crosshairs to the desired position — you can drag any part of the crosshairs and drag it in any direction. Text is entered in the foreground.

    Note: You can have only one set of crosshairs on at a time.
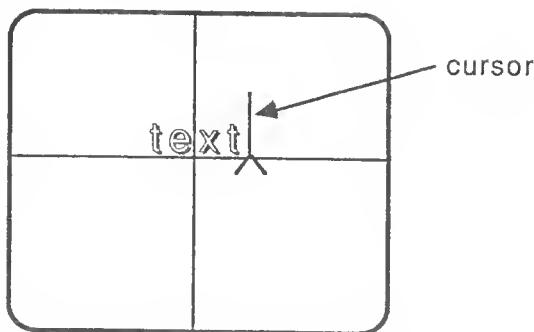
Figure 4.1   The Amiga-Font Crosshairs.

Once the crosshairs are on-screen, you can use these keyboard commands to place them for easy text line-up:

Far Left:

SHIFT   ALT   →

Far Right:

SHIFT   ALT   ←

Centered:

SHIFT   ALT   ↑

or

SHIFT   ALT   ↓

To turn off the crosshairs:

■ Click anywhere on the screen with the Menu button.

Changing Amiga Fonts

Up to ten Amiga fonts at a time can be installed in VideoTitler. This lets you change fonts on the fly, without having to take the time to load them from a disk.

To change an Amiga font:

■ Either choose **Amiga Font** from the Text menu or press this function key:

F6

The **Amiga Font Select** requestor will appear showing all the fonts that are currently installed. The blue, highlighted box is the font currently in use.

■ Select a font. Its box will become highlighted.

■ Select the close box in the upper left corner of the requestor. The new font will appear when you turn on the crosshairs and start typing — if you choose **Entry** to turn on the crosshairs, the vertical placement of the cursor will take the font size into account.

Note: The following key commands for selecting fonts are alternatives to bringing up the Amiga Font Select requestor. They work only when the crosshairs are turned on.

A   F1   through   A   F10

or

`[A] [F1]` through `[A] [F10]`
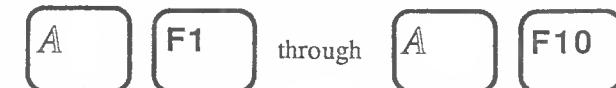
Installing Amiga Fonts

You can replace the font selections in the **Amiga Font Select** requestor by installing new fonts off the data disk in the external drive.

To install a new font:

- Press the F6 key to bring up the **Amiga Font Select** requestor.

- Select the font to be replaced.

- Select **Install New Font** from the lower right corner of the requestor. A requestor will appear listing the Amiga fonts available on the data disk in the external drive (DF1:).

  Note: VideoTitler's data disk contains a large selection of Amiga fonts. However, you can install other Amiga fonts off another data disk (see Appendix C, "Making a Font Data Disk," for more information).

- Select a font and then select **OK**. That font will appear in the slot you had highlighted.

Selecting and Editing Amiga Text

As long as already-typed text is still in the foreground (i.e. you haven't "stamped" it yet (explained in Chapter 7, "The Text Menu: Editing the Foreground"), you can select it for further editing. When text is selected, you can drag it to a new area, correct mistakes, change the font, change the color, and more.

To select Amiga text:

- First, click the Menu button if there are crosshairs currently on-screen.

- Click on the center of the text you want to edit with the Selection button. (You can only select one line of text at a time.) The crosshairs will appear on the text. You'll know the text is definitely selected if the cursor appears at the end of the line. If it isn't, click the Menu button and try again.

VideoTitler supports basic text editing functions to use while typing or editing selected text. You can:

- Press the BACKSPACE key to erase mistakes.

- Press the SHIFT-BACKSPACE key combination to erase all text to the left of the cursor.

- Press the left and right arrow keys to move the cursor to another position in the text to insert or delete text.

- Press the DEL key to erase mistakes (after you've positioned the cursor).

- Press the SHIFT-DEL key combination to erase all text to the right of the cursor.

- Press the SHIFT-ALT-arrow key combination to place selected text, as explained in "Entering Amiga Text."

- Press the up or down arrow keys to select another line of text. VideoTitler keeps track of the order in which text lines were entered — they always redraw on the screen in the same order. The arrow keys follow this sequence when selecting text:

Selects Text Entered Before Current Selection:

[↓]

Selects Text Entered After Current Selection:

[↑]

Note: See Chapter 7, "The Text Menu: Editing the Foreground," for information on reordering text entries.

■ Press the RETURN key to go to the next line. Normally, a carriage return will move the cursor down a distance of one character height. However, you can preset the direction and distance (vertically and horizontally) the cursor will go when you press the RETURN key (see Figure 4.2).

If you look closely at the screen, you'll see that the images are made up of tiny squares of color, called "pixels." The distance the cursor is moved is measured in pixels. After pressing RETURN, you can move the cursor either one pixel or five pixels at a time and it will adjust the cursor for the next return:

One Pixel Down:

[CTRL] [↓]

One Pixel Up:

[CTRL] [↑]

One Pixel Left:

[CTRL] [←]

One Pixel Right:

[CTRL] [→]

Five Pixels Down:

[SHIFT] [CTRL] [↓]

Five Pixels Up:

[SHIFT] [CTRL] [↑]

Five Pixels Left:

[SHIFT] [CTRL] [←]

Five Pixels Right:
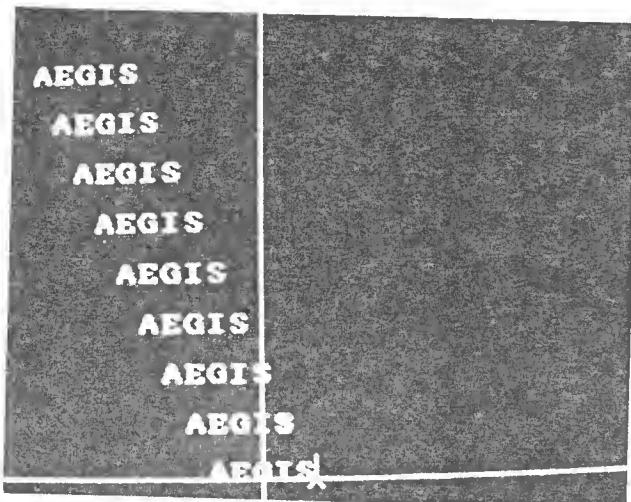
[SHIFT] [CTRL] [→]

Figure 4.2   Examples of Carriage-Return Offsets.

To adjust the return:

- Drag the crosshairs to the starting position and type the first line of text.

- Press RETURN.

- Press any combination of CTRL-arrow and SHIFT-CTRL-arrow keys as many times as needed to place the carriage return offset. Every time you press RETURN, the cursor will move in the distance and direction you specified. You can change back to the normal setting by turning off the crosshairs.

A Note on Keyboard Commands

You can't choose something from the menu without deactivating selected text. Therefore, start using the keyboard equivalents of

menu items now, as you learn VideoTitler. We think you'll get a kick out of being able to dramatically change the appearance of text with just a few keystrokes.

Defaults

The term "default" means a preset condition that stays the same until you change it. The default condition for entering Amiga text is that it will stay centered on the crosshairs as you type. You can change the default to either left or right justification—"left" lines up the left margins (like this paragraph) and "right" lines up the right.

To change the justification:

- Choose the desired option from the Defaults submenu in the Text menu. A checkmark means it's turned on.

The Defaults submenu also has options for changing the character emphasis without changing the font. You can change the emphasis to be *italicized*, underlined, or **bold-faced**.

To change the character emphasis:

- Choose the desired option from the Defaults submenu in the Text menu. A checkmark means it's turned on.

- To undo a choice, choose the option again.

- To change the default back to plain, press SHIFT-F1.

Note: The following key commands only work when text is selected. Use them when you want to deviate from the defaults set in the Text menu. Once you deselect text, the defaults will revert to those in the menu.

Right Justification:

```
[ ALT ]  [ ← ]
```

Left Justification:

```
[ ALT ]  [ → ]
```

Center Justification:

```
[ ALT ]  [ ↑ ]   or   [ ALT ]  [ ↓ ]
```

Plain:

```
[ SHIFT ]  [ F1 ]
```

Italic:

```
[ SHIFT ]  [ F2 ]
```

Bold:

```
[ SHIFT ]  [ F3 ]
```

Underline:

```
[ SHIFT ]  [ F4 ]
```
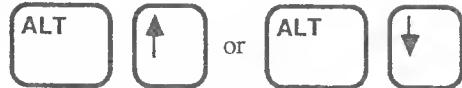
CHAPTER 5 | THE TEXT MENU: POLY FONTS

Poly fonts were specially designed for VideoTitler using "move" and "draw" programming commands. This means they can be rescaled easily. You can expand or compress them in any direction, skew them, and adjust the spacing between individual letters.

Entering Poly Fonts

To turn on the poly font cursor:

■ Either choose Entry from the Text menu, or while holding down the SHIFT button, click anywhere on the screen with the Selection button. The cursor, a skinny white rectangle, will appear.

■ Drag the cursor to the desired position. When you type, the cursor will expand to enclose the text. Keys that don't have corresponding poly characters will appear as spaces. Like Amiga text, poly text is entered in the foreground.

Note: You can have only one poly-font cursor on at a time.

Once the poly-font cursor is on-screen, you can use these keyboard commands to place it for easy text line-up:

Far Left:

[ALT] [→]

Far Right:

[ALT] [←]

Centered:

[ALT] [↑] or [ALT] [↓]

To turn off the cursor:

■ Either click anywhere on the screen with the Menu button, or press the RETURN key.

Changing Poly Fonts

VideoTitler has a wide variety of poly fonts, which are based on popular typefaces used by professional printers (see Figure 5.1).

ROADRUNNER
ROBIN
Sparrow
Swan
TOUCAN
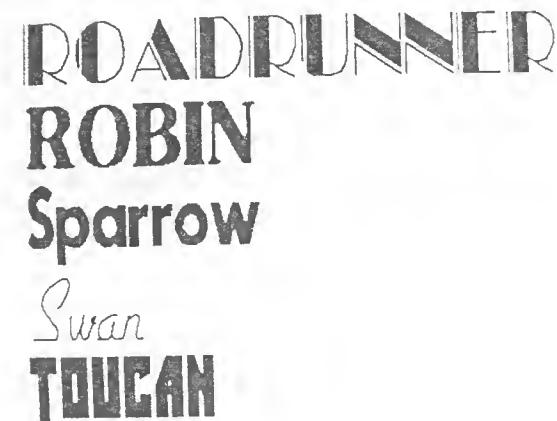
Figure 5.1   Poly Font Selections.

■ **Roadrunner:** this is an upper-case-only font, commonly referred to as "Broadway Engraved" or "Art Deco" in the printing business.

■ **Robin:** available in upper case only, this font is rounded with serifs, and is based on the Souvenir typeface. This font takes a longer time to render because the curved sides require many points.

■ **Sparrow:** available in upper and lower case with special characters, this is a rounded, sanserif (no serifs) font, based on the Helvetica typeface.

■ **Swan:** this is a flowing script font which relies on applied styles for its look (styles are described in Chapter 6, "The Text Menu: Styles"). Swan is not based on one font, but a combination of several flowing script fonts. It is designed to be typed as a series of lower-case letters, where upper case is

simply used to start a word or a line of text. However, if you do want to place upper-case letters together, you can use the kerning option (described under "Kerning Poly Text" in this chapter) to space them apart. This font provides several flourishes you can place at the beginning and ending of the text, including:

A short (about 1/2 character) extension line along the baseline:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [A]
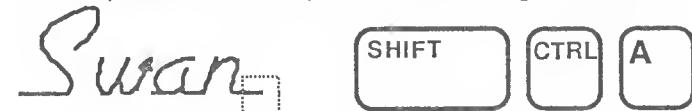
A long (about 1 character) extension line along the baseline:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [B]

A long extension line which drops down at the end:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [C]

A hook which extends from the last character, then makes a °180 turn:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [D]
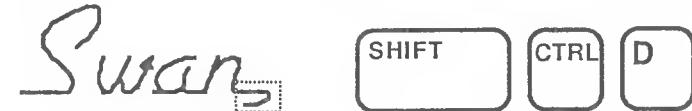
A horizontal, left extension of the end of the hook in the previous character:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [E]

A drop, used to terminate a backwards line under a word:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [F]

A backwards extension on the main baseline:

Swan   [SHIFT] [CTRL] [G]

- **Toucan:** this is upper and lower case; however, the lower case simply contains variations of the upper case. Those variations usually consist of one leg on the letter extending beyond the top or bottom of the letter.

- **Shapes:** this poly font is available through the CTRL and alphanumeric keys when any other polyfont is loaded.

  [CTRL] [! 1] through [CTRL] [) 0]

  [CTRL] [A] through [CTRL] [Z]

[CTRL] [< ,] and [CTRL] [: ;]
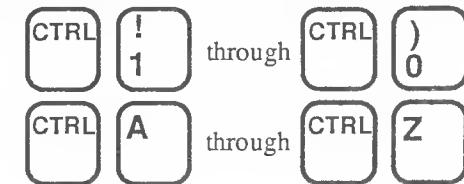
You can create borders or use the kerning keys (described under "Kerning Poly Text" in this chapter) to put one shape on top of another — a heart inside a box, for example. Figure 5.2 shows the available shapes and their corresponding keys.
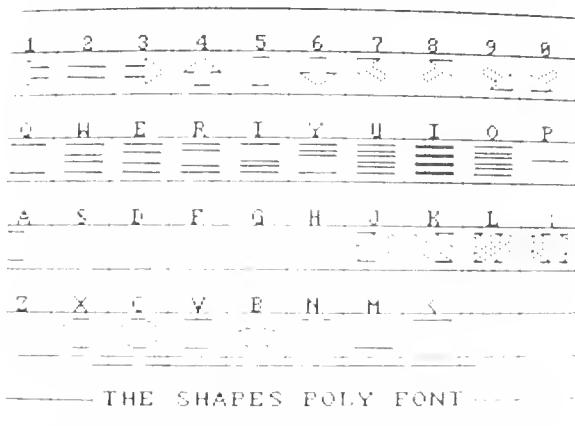
Figure 5.2   Shape Selections.

To load a poly font:

- Either choose **Poly Font** from the Text menu or press this function key:

[F7]

The storage requestor will appear with the pfonts directory open.

- Click on a font with the selection button.

- Select **OK**.

Note: you can only have one poly font loaded in VideoTitler at a time.

Selecting and Editing Poly Text

As discussed in Chapter 4, "The Text Menu: Amiga Fonts," you can select text that's still in the foreground for further editing. Like Amiga text, you can drag poly text to a new area, erase and add letters at the end of the line, change the font, change the color, and more.

To select poly text:

- First, click the Menu button if there is a poly-font cursor on-screen.

- Click on the center of the text with the Selection button. The poly-font cursor will enclose that line of text. Once the text is selected, you can add more letters, use the F7 key to change the font, and so on.

  You can use these functions while typing or editing selected poly text:

- Press the Backspace key to erase mistakes.

- Press the ALT-arrow key combinations for easy text placement, as explained in "Entering Poly Fonts."

- Press the up or down arrow keys to select another line of text. VideoTitler keeps track of the order in which text lines were entered — they always redraw on the screen in the same order. The arrow keys follow this sequence when selecting text:

Selects Text Entered Before Current Selection:

[↓]

Selects Text Entered After Current Selection:

[↑]

Note: See Chapter 7, "The Text Menu: Editing the Foreground," for information on reordering text entries.

■ Use the right and left arrow keys to adjust the "kerning" for each letter.

Kerning Poly Text

The word "kern" is a printers' term for the part of the font that sticks out sideways—the cap on a "T," for example. If all letter combinations were spaced an equal amount, those letters with kerns would cause unsightly gaps. Therefore, the idea is to move the letter with a kern closer to its neighbors, where possible. For example, in the "To" combination, move the "o" so that it's nestled under the cap of the "T."

To adjust the kerning:

■ After you've typed the first letter of the kerned pair, press the left arrow key to close the gap. The right side of the cursor will move closer to the first letter. This marks the beginning of the next letter. You can also kern right to widen a gap or kern to the far left to overlap characters.

Each click of the arrow moves the cursor one-tenth of the width of a Shapes character. Each click of a SHIFT-arrow moves the

cursor one Shapes character width — perfect for overlapping Shapes.

Note: The following key commands only work when the poly-font cursor is on-screen:

Kern Left 1/10 character space:

[←]

Kern Right 1/10 character space:

[→]

Kern Left 1 full character space:

[SHIFT] [←]

Kern Right 1 full character space:

[SHIFT] [→]

Note: Kerning is entered as invisible poly characters, and there is a limit of 40 characters per line. Therefore, use the BACK SPACE key to undo a kern, rather than using the opposite kerning key. Also, kerning can reduce the size of the cursor, making it hard to select the text later on. Therefore, expand the cursor with the kerning keys, should it become too small.

Resizing and Distorting Poly Text

Besides moving, stretching and shrinking poly text in all directions, you can turn text upside down and/or reverse it left to

right. The only restriction is that you can't make the baseline of text perfectly vertical (although you can get very close).

The cursor has nine "grab" spots for moving and altering the text: the left, right, top and bottom sides, four corners, and center. To move a grab spot, click on it and drag it with the Selection button. You can:

■ Move text by dragging its center.

■ Shrink or expand text sideways by dragging the midpoint of either the left or right side.

■ Shrink or expand text vertically by dragging the midpoint of either the top or bottom side.

■ Reverse text by dragging either the right or left side past the other side. Used with the "stamp" function, this is one way to produce a mirrored effect.

■ Turn text upside down by dragging either the top or bottom past the other.

■ Skew text with respect to its baseline by dragging either of the top corners.

■ Skew text *and* its baseline by dragging either of the bottom corners.

To move poly text:

■ Select the desired text.

■ Click on the center of the text with the Selection button and drag it to another location. The poly text will redraw in the new location.

To adjust poly text:

■ Select the desired text.

■ Click on a grab spot with the Selection button and drag it until the cursor is in the desired shape and orientation. The poly text will redraw to fill the cursor's new shape and orientation.

Note: The size of the cursor for entering new poly text depends on the size of the last text selected. For example, let's say you stretched a line of text to be 3" high and then turned off the cursor. When you enter new text, it will also be 3" high. This is for consistency when you enter multiple lines of text.
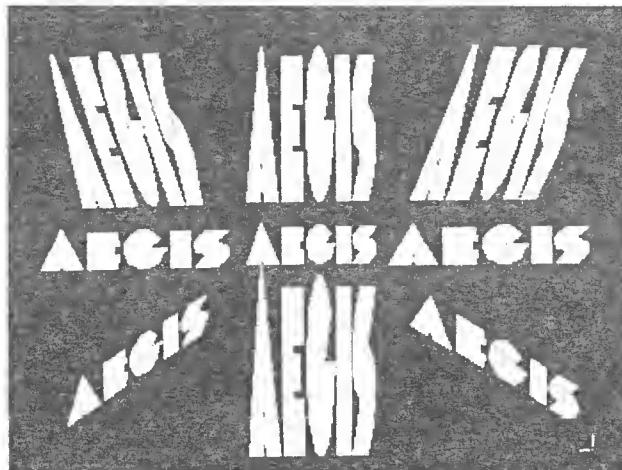
Figure 5.3 Examples of Poly Text Transformations.

Defaults

The default for entering poly text is that it will be filled with a solid color. You can change the default to either outline (**Full**)

or partial outline (**Partial**). Choosing **Partial** causes one segment to be removed from the outline — best with the Toucan font and an applied style (discussed in Chapter 6, "The Text Menu: Styles"). *Note: The Swan poly font is not affected by either the Full or Partial defaults.*

Partial Outline:

| SHIFT | F6 |

Full Outline:

| SHIFT | F7 |

Filled:

| SHIFT | F8 |

CHAPTER
6 | THE TEXT MENU: STYLES

Style

The Style command is perhaps the most powerful feature of VideoTitler. With a few keystrokes, you can change the look of a font so much that you'll virtually create new fonts. The default style is "Plain" — nineteen more styles are available for both Amiga and poly fonts, including neon and 3-D effects. You can change a style's color selections (discussed in Section 3: Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu"),or create your own styles (discussed in Appendix D, "Expert Mode"). Plus, you can use the numeric keypad to edit various backdrop and shadow effects.

Choosing a New Style

Certain text entries look better than others with certain styles. These factors affect how a style will look: font, color palette, and skewed text.

To choose a new style prior to text entry:

■ Either choose **Style** from the **Text** menu or press this function key:

> F10
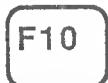
The **Text Styles** requestor will appear with the current style highlighted in blue (see Figure 6.1).

■ Select the desired style. It will become highlighted.

■ Select the close box in the upper left corner. All subsequent text entries — no matter which font — will be in the style you chose.

CTRL		ALT
Plain	F1	SmallCross
3D_Block	F2	LargeCross
3D_Block-A	F3	Small_Star
Thin_Edge	F4	LargeStar
Fat_Edge	F5	Outline
Thin_Neon	F6	Narrow
Fat_Neon	F7	Broad
Outln_Neon	F8	BrdOutline
OffsetEdge	F9	SprdDiag
Emboss	F10	SprdHoriz
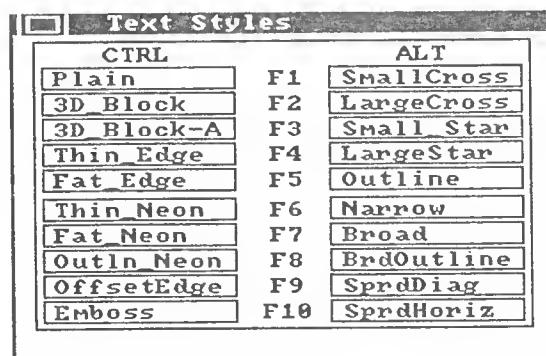
Figure 6.1   The Text Styles Requestor.

To change the style of on-screen text:

■ Select the text.

■ Press the F10 key. The **Text Styles** requestor will appear.

■ Select the desired style. It will become highlighted.

■ Select the close box in the upper left corner. The text will change to the new style. All subsequent text entries will be in that style.

Following is a brief description of each style. But the best way to understand them is on a sample line of text. First enter a large Amiga font or enlarge a poly font — Toucan is a good choice. While the text is selected, flip through the different styles using the following keyboard combinations — For quick results, **Lo-res** and **Overscan Off**, in the Display menu, should be checkmarked. Choose them if they aren't. Keep in mind that some fonts look better than others with certain styles.

Note: The following key commands are alternatives to bringing up the Text Styles requestor; therefore, they won't work when it is on-screen. Also, either the crosshairs or the poly-font cursor must be turned on.

■ **Plain:** This is the default plain text rendering. You can always go back to plain text by typing:

> CTRL   F1

■ **3D Block:** This is a block letter formed by doing an "extrusion":

> CTRL   F2

■ **3D Block-A:** This is a block letter which has a raised outlined letter of a different color, giving the appearance of raised edges:

> CTRL   F3

■ **Thin Edge:** This outlines the characters in a narrow edge of a different color:

CTRL   F4

■ **Fat Edge:** This is just like Thin Edge, except the edge is twice as wide:

CTRL   F5

■ **Thin Neon:** This surrounds the characters with a smear of four different shades of the same color:

CTRL   F6

■ **Fat Neon:** This is just like Thin Neon, except it has a smear of six different shades of the same color:

CTRL   F7

■ **Outline Neon:** This just like Fat Neon, except the main part of the letter is made an outline. This only looks good on large letters:

CTRL   F8

■ **Offset Edge:** This surrounds the characters with a thin outline which is offset to let the background show through:

CTRL   F9

■ **Emboss:** This produces a bas-relief effect which looks best on squared text. Embossing is especially effective with special

shapes, such as rectangles, upon which you can type messages with other styles:

CTRL   F10

■ **Small Cross:** Like the Neon style, this surrounds the characters with a four-color smear, but notches are cut from the corners, producing a cross effect:

ALT   F1

■ **Large Cross:** This is just like Small Cross, except it uses a six-color smear:

ALT   F2

■ **Small Star:** This surrounds the characters with a four-color smear that is notched for a star effect:

ALT   F3

■ **Large Star:** This surrounds the characters with a six-color smear that is notched for a star effect:

ALT   F4

■ **Outline:** This produces a 3-D outline effect:

ALT   F5

■ **Narrow:** This is almost identical to the 3D Block style. It was

designed primarily to fill out the backdrop of the Swan poly font:

[ALT] [F6]

■ **Broad:** This is a thicker version of the Narrow style, also for use with the Swan poly font:

[ALT] [F7]

■ **Broad Outline:** This is a variation of the Broad style, with an outline used instead:

[ALT] [F8]

■ **Spread Diagonal:** Designed primarily for the Swan font, this diagonally smears the characters and adds a drop for a 3-D effect:

[ALT] [F9]

■ **Spread Horizontal:** Also designed with the Swan font in mind, this horizontally smears the characters and adds a drop for a 3-D effect:

[ALT] [F10]

Changing the Direction of Block Text

The angle of the backdrop and raised portion on the 3-D styles is not limited to just one direction. You can use the numeric keypad to change the angle to any of eight orientations (see Figure 6.2).
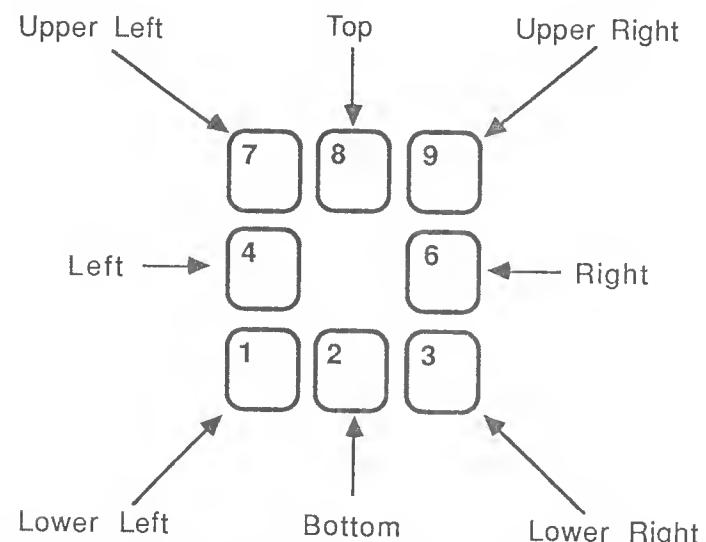
Figure 6.2 Keypad Commands for Changing the Direction of 3-D Styles.

To change the direction of 3-D styles:

■ First, select the text.

■ Choose the desired direction from the numeric keypad.

You can also use the following key combinations to change the depth of the backdrop and raised part of 3D text — press them as many times as necessary to get the desired depth (You can try them on the 3D Block-A style):

Increase Backdrop Depth:

[ALT] [0]

Decrease Backdrop Depth:

[ALT] [.]

Increase Raised Depth:

[CTRL] [0]

Decrease Raised Depth:

[CTRL] [.]

Shadow Effects

The number 5 key on the numeric keypad is a toggle switch for turning a shadow of selected text on and off. You can change the direction with the same keys you use for 3-D styles and alter the depth with the 0 and decimal keys, and attach the shadow as a solid backdrop to the text. (see Figure 6.3).

Upper Left   Top   Upper Right

Shadow On/Off

7 8 9

Left → 4 5 6 ← Right

1 2 3

Lower Left   0   Lower Right

Bottom

Increase Depth   Decrease Depth
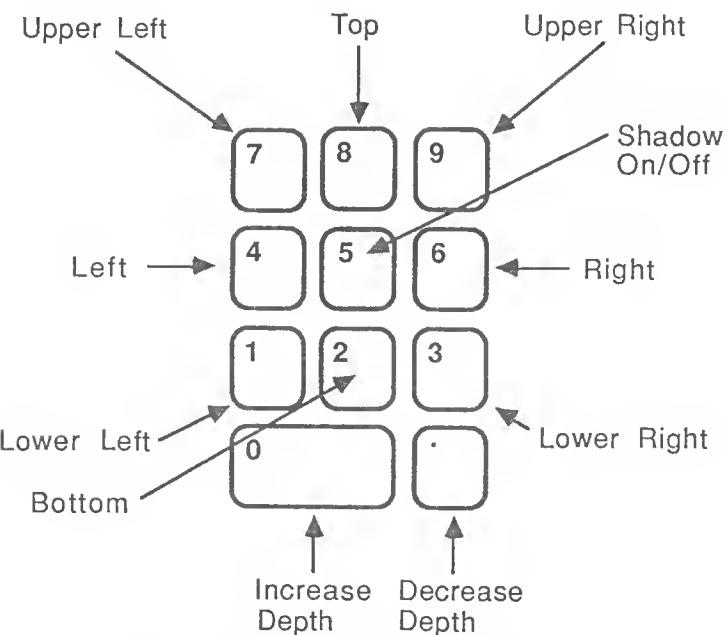
Figure 6.3   Keypad Commands for Text Shadows. Holding the SHIFT key down while pressing one of the direction keys will attach the shadow as a solid backdrop to the text.

To toggle on Text Shadows:

■ First, select the text.

■ Press the number 5 key on the numeric keypad. A shadow will appear behind the text.

■ Press the desired key on the numeric keypad to change the direction of the shadow. You can hold down the SHIFT key while doing this, to make the shadow a solid backdrop attached to the text.

CHAPTER 7 | THE TEXT MENU: EDITING THE FOREGROUND

Refresh

Choosing **Refresh** from the **Text** menu will redraw both the foreground and the background, erasing anything that doesn't belong. The equivalent keyboard command is:

$$\boxed{A} \quad \boxed{R}$$

Stamp

The **Stamp** function freezes text in the foreground to the background. This is required before you can use the options from the **Edit** menu to paste to text. Once you stamp text, you won't be able to move or edit it, so plan ahead.

To stamp the entire foreground to the background:

■ First, click the Menu button if either the crosshairs or poly-font cursor are on-screen.

■ Choose **Stamp** from the **Text** menu or use this keyboard command:

[A] [S]

The screen will flash. Also, duplicate text will appear in the foreground right on top of the stamped text. Select the text and drag it away and you'll see the stamped text underneath.

To stamp a line of text:

■ While holding the CTRL key down, click on the middle of the text with the Selection button:

[CTRL] Select Text

The screen will flash and a foreground copy of the text will appear on top of the stamped text.

Clear

This command only affects the foreground and is not to be confused with the **Clear To** command in the **Edit** menu, which only affects the background.

To erase the entire contents of the foreground:

■ Choose **Clear** from the **Text** menu or use this keyboard command:

[A] [C]

To erase a line of text:

■ While holding down the CTRL and left Amiga keys, click on the middle of the text with the Selection button:

[CTRL] [A] Select Text

Deactivating Text

You can temporarily erase text from the display. This a helpful feature for when you're recording an animation and you want a line of text to appear (or disappear) at a time.

To deactivate a line of text:

■ While holding down the CTRL and SHIFT keys, click on the middle of the text with the Selection button:

[SHIFT] [CTRL] Select Text

The text will disappear from the display. You can bring it back by either choosing **Refresh**, or selecting a line of text and using the up and down arrows to select other lines of text.

Rearranging Text Layers

VideoTitler keeps track of the order in which text was entered. For example, when you choose **Refresh** or any other command that causes the screen to redraw, you'll notice that the first text line you entered is redrawn first, and then the next line you entered, and so on. Also, when you move a text line to cover another text line, the older line always snaps to behind the newer line. However, you can use the ALT key to change the layering order.

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To move a text line to the bottom layer:

■ While holding down the ALT button, click on the middle of the text with the Selection button:

[ALT] Select Text

Note: The text does not have to be covering other text for you to execute this command.

SECTION

3 THE BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 8 | THE PROJECT MENU

About...

Choosing this menu command brings up a requestor with information about VideoTitler — you can check whether you have the most recent version. **Chip Memory** and **Fast Memory** measures (in bytes) how much memory (RAM) is currently available. Hit any key or mouse button to put it away.

Note: VideoTitler will warn you when you're low on memory, unless you do something that uses it up too fast, such as installing a large font. This is not a major concern if you have one megabyte or more of memory.

New

Choosing this menu command clears both the background and foreground so you can start with a fresh screen.

The Storage Requestor

VideoTitler uses a standard storage requestor for retrieving files (IFF picture files, color palette files, settings files, and so on) or saving them to disk (or memory).
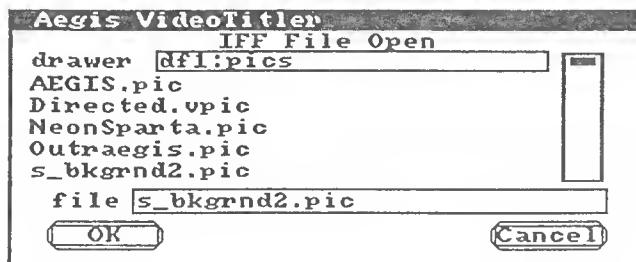

Figure 8.1 A VideoTitler Storage Requestor.

The **drawer** edit field shows the current root directory and any open subdirectories, sub-subdirectories, and so on. (Subdirectories are called "drawers" if they have an associated icon (symbol) on the Workbench screen.) For example:

DF0: — The open root directory is the disk in the internal drive.
RAM: — The open root directory is the Amiga's random access memory (called RAM), which for all intents and purposes, can act as a disk. This is handy if you're continually accessing the same file and you don't want to wait for the mechanical drive to read it every time; you would just save it to RAM: and instantly access it from there. It's also useful as a temporary holding area if you don't have enough disk space. Just remember that everything in RAM: is erased when you either turn off or reboot the computer.

DF1:pics — The open root directory is the disk in the external drive and the open subdirectory is pics (where the IFF picture files are kept).
DH0:VideoTitler/pics — The open root directory is the hard drive, the open subdirectory is VideoTitler, and the open sub-subdirectory is pics.

To open a directory and choose a file:

If you want to try the following steps now, choose **Picture** from the **Open** submenu in the **Project** menu. This brings up the storage requestor — many other options in the **Project** menu will also bring it up.

■ Click in the **drawer** edit field with the Selection button. A cursor will appear.

■ Use the BACK SPACE and DEL keys to erase any current information.

■ Type the root directory, colon, and the subdirectory — without spaces. For subdirectories, and so on, separate them with forward slashes. If you don't know what subdirectories are contained in that root directory, don't type anything after the colon and you'll see a listing after you complete the next step.

■ Press the RETURN key. The disk drive will whir and the list will change to show the contents of the current directory.

■ To scroll through the list, drag the scroll bar on the right of the requestor.

■ To choose an item from the list, click on the name with the Selection button. If it's a directory, it will appear in the **drawer** edit field. If it's a file, it will appear in the **file** edit field.

■ To go back to the root directory so you can open a new subdirectory, click in the **drawer** edit field, erase everything

after the colon, and press RETURN. The list will change to show the contents of the root directory.

When you're done looking at the requestor, select its **Cancel** button to close it.

You'll probably need several data disks while working with VideoTitler: one for fonts, one for pictures, one to save your finished work to, and so on. The storage requestor will let you swap disks as needed.

To use more than one data disk with a drive:

Note: Never remove a disk while the drive light is still on.

■ After you've called up the storage requestor, remove the original data disk from the external drive and insert the data disk you want to access.

*Note: The program is preset to look for certain directories which may not be on your new data disk. If so, a requestor saying **Wrong Diskette?** will appear. Select OK and go on to the next step.*

■ Click in the **drawer** edit field with the Selection button and use the BACK SPACE and DEL keys to erase the current information.

■ Enter **DF1:** and press RETURN. The disk drive will whir and the list will change to show the contents of the new disk.

Open

The **Open** menu option brings up the storage requestor for loading files into VideoTitler. The storage requestor can list every file in every directory, no matter whether it is a picture file, window file, or whatever. However, if the file is not the

type named at the top of the storage requestor , you won't be able to open it.

To open a file:

■ Choose the desired option from the **Open** submenu in the **Project** menu. The Storage requestor will appear.

■ Open the directory containing the desired file and select the file. The directory will be open every time you bring up that storage requestor, until you choose a new directory.

■ Select the **OK** button. The file will be opened.

Picture

You can bring a painting, window, or brush created in any IFF paint program into VideoTitler for use as a background. You can also open the background of a framedata file or the first frame of an IFF anim file. Anything already in the background, such as another picture or stamped text, will be erased by the new picture. The new picture will also replace the current color palette (the available color selections) with its own.

Since the foreground and the background must share the same color palette, it's a good idea to decide ahead of time which color palette to use, or else you may be unpleasantly surprised to see your foreground take on new colors when you bring in a picture. For more on the color palette, see Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu" or Appendix A, "The Color Palette."

Note: If you see an **ATTENTION!!** requestor which says **"IFF Width/Height/Depth truncation,"** the picture is either wider, deeper, or higher than what your screen display is set up for. Select **OK** to close the requestor. See Chapter 10, "The Display Menu," for more information.

Window

You can load any window, brush, or picture which was created in an IFF paint program into VideoTitler as a window. You can also load the background of a framedata file or the first frame of an ANIM file. The window will take on the colors of the foreground, or the background if it's present.

When you open a window, it is copied to the clipboard, which appears, containing the window and a clip frame (see Figure 8.2, the clip frame is described in detail in Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu"). The window will stay on the clipboard, from which it can be pasted onto the background using the **Edit** menu commands.

The clipboard is an area in memory reserved for cut and paste functions. The previous contents of the clipboard are erased every time new data is copied to the clipboard.

*Note: The clipboard is occasionally erased so that VideoTitler can use it for other purposes.*
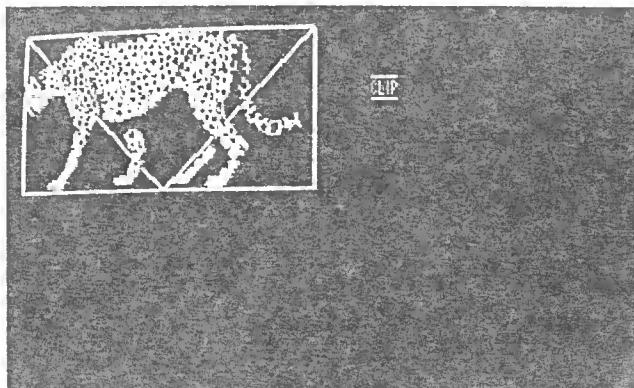
Figure 8.2   A Window and Its Clip Frame.

To open a window:

- Choose **Window** from the **Open** submenu in the **Project** menu. The storage requestor will appear.

- Choose the desired window file from the storage requestor and select **OK**. The foreground and background will disappear and the clipboard will appear, containing the window. The window will be enclosed in a clip frame. The clip frame has nine grab spots for adjustments to the window's boundaries. If you don't make any changes, the window will remain in its entirety on the clipboard.

- Click the Menu button to bring back the background. The clipboard will remain hidden until you use the **Edit** menu commands (described in Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu). Next, the background will reappear.

- Choose **Refresh** from the **Text** menu to make the foreground reappear.

ScrapBook

You may want to create a temporary storage area in RAM (or elsewhere) for IFF files you'll be using often during the work session — a "scrapbook" to which you can easily add or remove files. The **Scrapbook** storage requestor works the same as the **Picture** requestor. Because the storage requestor leaves the last selected directory open, you can leave more than one directory open for easy access — for example, RAM for the **Scrapbook** requestor and the pictures directory for the **Picture** requestor.

FrameData

This option opens a file — a "frame" — made of both foreground and background items. This way, you can still edit the foreground text and the background separately. This is

convenient if you want to pick up where you left off during the last session.

If your foreground uses fonts you installed in the **Amiga Font Select** requestor, make sure of the following:

- The data disk containing those fonts must be in the external drive when you start the program.

- Those fonts must be installed in the **Amiga Font Select** requestor. You can always go back and manually reinstall them, but an easier way is to save your font selections in a settings file (described in the "Settings" section of this chapter), to be opened before you open the FrameData file.

If these conditions aren't met, the foreground text will appear in the default fonts instead of the ones you chose.

Also, if you placed the poly fonts on another disk, that disk must be in the drive when you open a framedata file containing poly fonts.

Palette

Choosing this command lets you open a color palette you created in VideoTitler or any other IFF program. If you'd like to use the same colors that an IFF window, brush, picture or framedata file uses, you can open that file with the **Open Palette** command and the palette will be extracted from the file, without ever putting the image on the screen. For more on the color palette, see Appendix A, "The Color Palette."

Save

Anything you create in VideoTitler resides in the Amiga's internal memory, called RAM (random access memory). It will disappear when you quit the program unless you save it to disk.

Note: A good rule of thumb is to save your work every fifteen minutes or so.

To save a file to disk:

- Choose the desired option from the **Save** submenu in the **Project** menu. The Storage requestor will open.

- Open the root directory and then the subdirectory (if any) you'd like to put the file in.

- Click in the **file** edit field with the Selection button and type a name for the file.

- Press RETURN. The drive will whir, the storage requestor will disappear, and a copy of your work will be recorded in the specified directory. Any further changes you make will not be recorded unless you save again.

You won't have to type the filename the next time you save — just choose it from the directory's list in the storage requestor and select **OK**.

Picture

This saves everything on the screen — foreground and background — as an IFF file you can open in any IFF paint program. Make sure your paint program supports the display resolution of your picture (see Chapter 10, "The Display Menu").

Window

You can save part of the background (or all of it) as an IFF window, which you can use with the cut and paste functions in the **Edit** menu or other IFF paint and animation programs.

To save a window:

- Choose **Window** from the **Save** submenu in the **Project** menu. The storage requestor will open.

- Open the root directory and then the subdirectory (if any) you'd like to put the file in.

- Click in the **file** edit field with the Selection button and type a name for the file.

- Press RETURN. The storage requestor will disappear, and a clip frame will appear around the background. The clip frame can be adjusted the same way as the poly-font cursor, except the clip frame has five grab spots instead of nine. They are:

  - The four sides. You can adjust the window size by dragging the four sides in or out.

  - The center. You can move the clip frame around the screen.

- Click the menu button. The drive will whir, and the window will be saved to the specified directory.

Scrapbook

The **Scrapbook** requestor works the same as the **Picture** requestor. A suggested use is to keep the RAM directory open in the **Scrapbook** requestor for easy access. This way RAM can act as a "scrapbook" for temporary storage of files.

FrameData

This saves the foreground and background as separate elements of the same file. If the foreground text was made with new fonts you installed in the **Amiga Font Select** requestor, save a settings file so that VideoTitler can automatically install those

fonts for you; otherwise, the text will appear in the default fonts (see the "Settings" section in this chapter).

Palette

You can make adjustments to the color palette and save the palette as an IFF file. (For more on the color palette, see Appendix A, "The Color Palette").

Settings

A settings file contains information about how VideoTitler is set up for your needs. When you use a settings file, you don't have to manually make these changes every time you start the program:

- Installed Amiga fonts. *Note: The data disk they're on must be in the external drive when VideoTitler is started.*

- Open poly font.

- Screen display.

- Available styles (because you can make your own).

- Current color palette and selected colors in the palette.

- Adjustments to the palettes in the **Edit** menu.

- Open directories.

- **Defaults** in **Text** menu.

The **Settings Save** menu command works the same as the other **Save** commands. Similarly, the **Settings Load** command is like the **Open** commands. *Note: When you load a settings file, it will erase the background and foreground.*

ANIM

If you have at least one and a half megabytes of memory, you can use VideoTitler's ANIM feature to record animations, which can be played back in a VideoSEG script (described in the VideoSEG User's Guide). You make the animation by manually moving text and clipboard images about the screen and recording an ANIM frame between each movement. Because you control the movement, the animation can be very smooth.

The ANIM file format uses a file-compression technique that stores only the differences between frames instead of the actual frames. This reduces the file size; however, keep in mind that movements of either many or large items produces a bigger difference between frames, resulting in larger files — a problem when you don't have enough available memory or disk space. This will also affect the playback rate of the animation.

The program disk also includes a utility, named ShowANIM, as another method of playback. See Appendix E, "ShowANIM," for more information. *Note: ANIM files recorded in VideoTitler are only compatible with version 4.0 (or greater) of ShowANIM.*

You can use the ANIM recording feature for many different effects, such as:

■ Making poly-text change size during a script.

■ Making a cel animation (page flipping) by loading a sequence of IFF pictures.

■ Spelling out the letters of a title one at a time. This effect was used in the *Max Headroom* television series to show read-outs on Edison Carter's "view-cam."

■ Typing a period in the Cross or Star styles and using it as a moving highlight around the edge of text.

■ Using the **Edit** menu's cut and paste options to simulate "ADO" effects, such as a picture flipping onto the screen.

To record an ANIM file:

■ Choose **Open ANIM** from the **ANIM** submenu in the **Project** menu. The storage requestor will appear. *Note: A checkmark beside the menu command means it's turned on.*

■ Open the root directory and then the subdirectory (if any) you'd like to put the ANIM file in.

■ Click in the file edit field with the Selection button, type a name for the ANIM file, and press RETURN. Now you can start recording frames of the animation.

■ Make the desired changes to the screen. Any on-screen cursor will not appear in the animation, should you wish to keep text selected.

■ Record the changes in an animation frame by either choosing **Add Frame** from the **Project** menu or pressing the ENTER key on the numeric keypad.

   The cursor will change to a **WAIT** symbol while the frame is being recorded.

■ Repeat the previous two steps until you have completed the animation.

■ When you're done, choose **Close ANIM** from the **Project** menu. *Note: You can't play back the animation in either VideoSEG, or ShowANIM until you've closed the ANIM file.*

Quit

Choosing this command exits the program. But first an
ATTENTION!! requestor will appear. This is to remind you
to save your work before you quit, or it will be lost forever.
You can press RETURN to select **QUIT** or SHIFT-RETURN
to select **NO**.

CHAPTER 9 THE EDIT MENU

Undo

You can choose **Undo** to reverse the most recent action
performed on the background. Items in the **Edit** menu and the
second part of the **Display** menu are affected by this command.
The equivalent key combination is:

$$A \quad U$$

Clipboard

The clipboard, like its counterpart in word processors, is a
holding area in memory reserved for cut and paste functions.
For example, you can copy a line of text to the clipboard, and
then paste as many copies as you like from the clipboard onto
the background.

All the **Clipboard** subcommands use a clip frame (see Figure
9.1) for selecting the image to be copied to the clipboard. The

clip frame has nine grab spots for adjusting its boundaries. For example, you can clip a cloud out of a landscape by reducing the clip frame so that it encloses just the cloud. To move a grab spot, click on it and drag it with the Selection button. You can:

- Move the clip frame by dragging its center.

- Shrink or expand the clip frame by dragging the midpoint of any of the four sides. The "V" in the clip frame indicates which end is up. This will become significant later on when you paste images upside down; but for now, flipping the clip frame has no effect.

- Change the clip frame's shape by dragging any of the four corners.
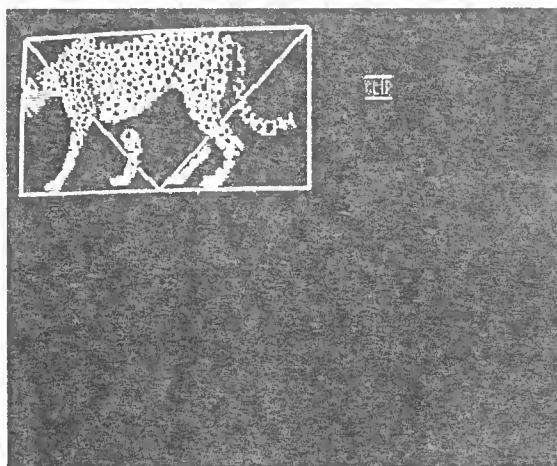
Figure 9.1   The Clip Frame.

The first three Clipboard subcommands in the Edit menu let you isolate a layer of the VideoTitler frame —foreground, background, or both — to clip an image from. They are:

- Set to Screen - Foreground and background images are combined and copied to the clipboard, where you can clip the desired area to remain on the clipboard.

- Set to Text - The foreground is copied to the clipboard, where you can clip the desired area to remain on the clipboard.

- Set to Background - The background is copied to the clipboard, where you can clip the desired area to remain on the clipboard.

  Note: If you want to copy an image that isn't on-screen to the clipboard, see Chapter 8, "The Project menu," for information on opening windows.

To copy on-screen images to the clipboard:

- Choose the desired option (of the first three) from the Clipboard submenu in the Edit menu. The chosen layer (or layers) will be copied to the clipboard, which will then appear.

- Adjust the clip frame's boundaries around the area you want to clip, which will remain on the clipboard for later paste operations.

- Press the Menu button to clip the image. The VideoTitler screen will reappear. The clipboard will remain hidden until you use the Edit Boundary or Paste commands. The previous contents of the clipboard are erased every time new images are copied to the clipboard. *Note: The clipboard is occasionally erased so that VideoTitler can use it for other purposes.*

Color Gradation

VideoTitler uses a "dithering" technique to create a blend of colors from top to bottom of the display. This is designed for use with a spread of different shades of a color — the more shades in a spread, the finer the gradation (see Appendix A, "The Color Palette," for instructions for creating a color spread). Once you've clipped a color gradation to the clipboard, you can paste it in various ways for special effects. For example, you can use the **Paste Under** function to change the color of stamped text to a spread of colors.

To copy a color gradation to the clipboard:

- Choose **Color Gradation** from the **Clipboard** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The **Start Color** palette will appear.

- Select a color. This is to be an end color of the gradation; therefore, it should be an end color of the spread of shades.

- Select the close box in the upper left corner of the palette. The **End Color** palette will appear.

- Select a color. This is to be the other end color of the gradation; therefore, it should be the other end color of the spread of shades. The order of the gradation is always the same: of the two colors you selected, the one that appears first in the sequence of paint pots will appear at the top of the screen.

- Select the close box in the upper left corner of the palette. The clipboard will appear, filled with the color gradation. A clip frame will also appear for adjusting the boundaries of the area to be clipped.

- Adjust the boundaries of the clip frame, if you like, then press the Menu button. The VideoTitler screen will reappear. The clipboard will remain hidden until you use the **Edit Boundary** or **Paste** commands.

Edit Boundary

Choosing this option brings up the contents of the clipboard so you can change the boundaries, or just see what's there. Press the Menu button after you've made your changes, to return to the main screen.

Paste

The **Paste** submenu provides many different ways to apply the clipboard image to the background (foreground images aren't affected). The variations multiply when you adjust the paste frame during the paste process. If you combine these with the commands in the **Display** menu, you can create stunning effects that would require much more effort to do —if you were able — in a paint program.

All the **Paste** subcommands use a paste frame for placing and adjusting the clipboard image to be pasted. The paste frame, like the clip frame, has nine grab spots. One of the paste frame's most important characteristics is that when you stretch a corner of the paste frame and then choose a paste command, the clipboard image will distort to fill the new shape.

To move a grab spot, click on it and drag it with the Selection button. You can:

- Move the paste frame by dragging its center.

- Shrink or expand the paste frame by dragging the midpoint of any side. The clipboard image will change to fill the new area when pasted.

- Reverse the paste frame by dragging one side past another. The clipboard image will be reversed when pasted.

■ Turn the paste frame upside down by dragging either the top or bottom past the other (the "V" indicates which side is up). The clipboard image will be upside down when pasted.

■ Skew or rotate the paste frame by dragging any of the four corners. You can partially flip the frame by dragging a corner past a side. The clipboard image will distort to fill the new shape, when pasted.

The **Paste** submenu commands are divided into three groups:

■ Regular pastes according to the paste frame's size and location.

■ Full Screen stretches the image to the edges of the screen display.

■ Tile repeats the image in a pattern.

You can choose either **Slow** or **Fast** (in the **Edit** menu) for the **Paste** commands. The **Fast** paste is an "integer-based algorithm"; therefore, the image is pasted more quickly, since **Fast** doesn't use fractions in its computations. The **Slow** paste is a "floating-point algorithm." Since it does use fractions, it takes awhile to complete the paste process. The differences between the two are more noticeable with certain **Paste** commands, as discussed in the following sections.
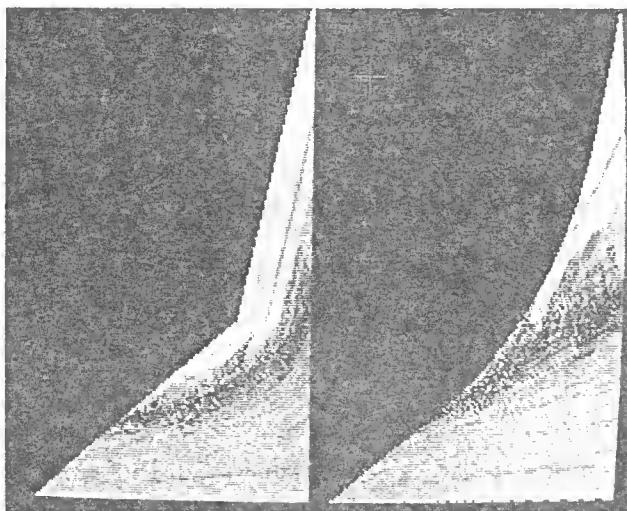
Figure 9.2 Fast and Slow Paste. These two images were pasted using the **Paste Full** command. The image on the left used a **Fast** paste, and the image on the right used a **Slow** paste. Note the curve of the **Slow** paste.

Paste Regular

■ **Full** - The clipboard image is pasted on top of the background. The equivalent keyboard command is:

■ **Transparent** - The clipboard image is pasted *on top* of the background so that the background shows through transparent areas in the image.

■ **Under** - The clipboard image is pasted *under* the background to show through transparent areas in the background.

To do a Regular paste:

■ Choose the desired option from the **Paste** submenu in the **Edit** menu. A paste frame will appear — an **ATTENTION!!** requestor will alert you if the clipboard is empty.

■ Adjust the paste frame, if you like, and press the Menu button. The paste will begin. If you'd like to stop the paste process, press the Menu button and then choose **Undo** to erase what's there.

Paste Full Screen

■ **Full Screen** - The clipboard image is expanded to the limits of the screen display, covering the background when pasted.

■ **Full Screen Transp** - The clipboard image is expanded to the limits of the screen display, and pasted *on top* of the background so that the background shows through transparent areas in the image.

■ **Full Screen Under** - The clipboard image is expanded to the limits of the screen display, and pasted *under* the background to show through transparent areas in the background.

To do a Full-Screen paste:

■ Choose the desired **Full Screen** option from the **Paste** submenu in the **Edit** menu — an **ATTENTION!!** requestor will alert you if the clipboard is empty. The paste frame, no matter what shape or size it is, will be automatically reshaped to conform with the edges of the display and the paste will begin. This can result in some interesting distortions, especially if the clip frame was very twisted to begin with.

You can stop the paste process by pressing the Menu button and then choosing **Undo** to erase what's there. Also, pasting with **Fast** turned on in the **Paste** menu is often preferable, since the differences between **Fast** and **Slow** are not readily apparent with the **Full Screen** options (except with extreme distortions in the clip frame).

Paste Tile

■ **Tile Full** - The clipboard image is repeated in a pattern to cover the background. The pattern for any of the **Tile** commands is greatly affected by the placement and shape of the paste frame.

■ **Tile Transparent** - The clipboard image is repeated in a pattern *on top* of the background so that the background shows through transparent areas in the pattern.

■ **Tile Under** - The clipboard image is repeated in a pattern *under* the background to show through transparent areas in the background.

To do a Tile paste:

■ Choose the desired option from the **Paste** submenu in the **Edit** menu. A paste frame will appear — an **ATTENTION!!** requestor will alert you if the clipboard is empty.

■ Place the paste frame and adjust it, if you like. There's a big difference between **Paste Tile Slow** and **Paste Tile Fast** when the paste frame is distorted.

■ Press the Menu button. The paste will begin. You can stop the paste process by pressing the Menu button and then choosing **Undo** to erase what's there.

MiniTutorial: Paste Transparent

Note: Lo-res and Overscan Off, in the Display menu, should be checkmarked. Choose them if they aren't. This is the fastest mode for experimentation.

■ Choose New from the **Project** menu.

■ Choose **Window** from the **Open** submenu in the **Project** menu, select the pics directory, and open **AP Country1.pic** off the data disk. The clipboard will appear, containing a scenic background.

■ Press the Menu button to return to the main screen — don't adjust the boundaries of the clip frame.

■ Choose **Picture** from the **Open** submenu in the **Project** menu, select the pics directory, and open **Aegis.pic** off the data disk. The Aegis logo will appear.

■ Press the F5 key to bring up the **Transparent Pen** color palette, select the lightest color blue, and then select the close box in the upper left corner to close the palette.

■ Choose **Transparent** from the **Paste** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The scenery will be pasted on top of the logo so that it shows through the transparent sky color. You could also use **Full Screen Transp** or **Tile Transparent** for different effects.

MiniTutorial: Paste Under

Note: Lo-res and Overscan Off, in the Display menu, should be checkmarked. Choose them if they aren't. This is the fastest mode for experimentation.

■ Choose New from the **Project** menu.

■ Choose **User Palette** from the **Colors** submenu in the **Edit** menu.

■ Load the Toucan poly font, type a line of text in the Plain style, and expand the size. (Make sure the default is **Filled**.)

■ Turn off the cursor and stamp the text by pressing right Amiga-S.

■ Because a duplicate copy is made in the foreground, you should clear it by pressing right Amiga-C; otherwise, you won't be able to see what's going on underneath later on.

■ Choose **Color Gradation** from the **Clipboard** submenu in the **Edit** menu.

■ Select the end colors of the gradation.

■ When the paste frame appears, press the Menu to copy the gradation to the clipboard — don't adjust the boundaries.

■ Press the F5 key to bring up the **Transparent Pen** color palette, select the exact color that the text is written in, and then select the close box in the upper left corner to close the palette.

■ Choose **Under** from the **Paste** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The paste frame will appear.

■ Shrink the sides of the paste frame so that it encloses just the text, and press the Menu button. The color gradation will show through only under the transparent color — that of the text. You could also use **Full Screen Under** or **Tile Under** for different effects.

Clear To

The **Clear To** commands erase the background (the foreground isn't affected), and replace it with the chosen option. They are:

Color Zero

This replaces the current background with a solid background in the color of the upper-left-corner paint pot in the palette (described in Appendix A, "The Color Palette"). The equivalent key combination is:

A   Z

Color

This lets you select any color in the palette to fill the background.

To clear the background to a specified color:

- Choose **Color** from the **Clear To** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The color palette will appear.

- Select the desired color, then select the close box in the upper-left corner. The current background will be replaced with a solid background in the color you chose.

Blocks

This replaces the current background with a grid and background in two colors of your choice.

To clear the background to a "block" look:

- Choose **Blocks** from the **Clear To** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The **Bkgnd Color** palette will appear.

- Select the desired color, then select the close box in the upper-left corner. The **Grid Color** palette will appear.

- Select the desired color, then select the close box in the upper-left corner. The background will be replaced by blocks in the colors you chose.

Gradation

As explained in the "Clipboard" section of this chapter, VideoTitler uses a dithering technique to create a blend of colors from top to bottom of the display. The **Gradation** command replaces the current background with a gradation in your choice of colors — most effective when they are end colors in a color spread.

To clear the background to a color gradation:

- Choose **Gradation** from the **Clear To** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The **Start Color** palette will appear.

- Select a color, then select the close box in the upper left corner. The **End Color** palette will appear. The order of the gradation is always the same: of the two colors you selected, the one that appears first in the sequence of paint pots will appear at the top of the screen.

- Select a color, then select the close box in the upper left corner. The current background will be replaced by a blend of colors.

Test Pattern

The test pattern shows where the edges of the screen display are; that is, the area of the screen you can work with. When severe overscan is turned on (discussed in Chapter 10, "The Display Menu"), the edges of the display are offscreen on the Amiga monitor but can be seen on regular t.v. sets. The diagonal lines of the test pattern intersect at the display limits, giving you an idea of where the overscan ends.

HalfBrite

The Amiga 500, 2000, and early models of the 1000 have the "halfbrite" capability, which makes it possible to have twice as many colors on-screen at once, the second half being dimmer versions of the first half. In VideoTitler, when you turn on **HalfBrite** in the **Display** menu, another set of colors is added to the color palette. These are duplicates of the original colors, only they're half as bright — thus the term "halfbrite."

To check for the HalfBrite capability:

*Note: **Lo-res** and **Overscan Off**, in the Display menu, should be checkmarked. Choose them if they aren't.*

- Choose **HalfBrite** from the **Display** submenu in the **Screen** menu— a checkmark means it's turned on. An **ATTENTION!!** requestor will appear.

- Select **OK**.

- Choose **Picture** from the **Open** submenu in the **Project** menu, select the **DF1:pics** directory, and open **HALFBRITETEST** off the data disk.

- You may get an **ATTENTION!!** requestor which says **IFF Truncation** — your first clue that you don't have halfbrite. Press the RETURN key if this happens. A scenic background

will appear. If you can't read this "secret" message: "YOU HAVE HALFBRITE!," your Amiga doesn't have the right version of the Paula chip — check with your dealer to order one. The part number is 8362 and it can be either rev. 6 or rev. 8 — no earlier than rev. 6!

The **HalfBrite** submenu commands provide several ways to turn images into halfbrite and vice-versa. They are:

- **Screen Full Brite** - Choosing this changes any halfbrite colors in the background or foreground back to fullbrite (regular) colors. This is a temporary condition which will be undone as soon as you give a command that causes the screen to redraw, such as selecting a line of text.

- **Screen Toggle Brite** - Choosing this switches fullbrite colors in the background or foreground to halfbrite and halfbrite colors to fullbrite. Choose it again to switch them back. This is a temporary condition which will be undone as soon as you give a command that causes the screen to redraw.

- **Background Full Brite** - Choosing this changes halfbrite colors in the background back to fullbrite. This is a permanent condition, but you can **Undo** it.

- **Background Toggle Brite** - Choosing this switches fullbrite colors in the background to halfbrite and halfbrite colors to fullbrite. Choose it again to switch them back. This is a permanent condition, but you can **Undo** it.

- **Color HalfTransparent** - This command makes a selected color in the foreground semitransparent so that a background image shows through in halfbrite. For example, if a line of foreground text is red, and you select red, you'll be able to see through the text to the background image as if you were looking through sunglasses. This is a temporary condition which will be undone as soon as you give a command that causes the screen to redraw; therefore, you should **Stamp** the results. Also, if the

color you selected is used in the background, it will turn to halfbrite in the background, as well.

To use Color HalfTransparent:

■ First, choose **HalfBrite** from the **Screen** submenu in the **Display** menu to turn it on.

■ Choose **Color HalfTransparent** from the **HalfBrite** submenu in the **Edit** menu. The **Clear Color** palette will appear.

■ Select a fullbrite color and close the palette. Foreground text in that color will become semitransparent — you won't see this effect if the background was in halfbrite to begin with. Also, it's a good idea to select a color that isn't used in the background image; otherwise, parts of the background will become halfbrite.

■ To save the results, **Stamp** the foreground.

Colors

The **Colors** submenu lets you choose from a group of color palettes (see Appendix A, "The Color Palette"). Once you've decided on the palette to use, you can select the colors to be used for text styles.

Color Pens

When you type a line of text in a style other than Plain, you'll notice that several colors are used at once. This is possible because styles consist of up to four layers (plus the shadow layer, which you can turn on for any style). Each layer is drawn with a different-color "pen."

The pens provide a way to have several colors selected at once from the same color palette, since only one palette can be used at a time. Figure 9.3 shows the different layers that text styles can

use and the pen that usually corresponds with each layer— most of the text styles provided use only the letter and drop layers.
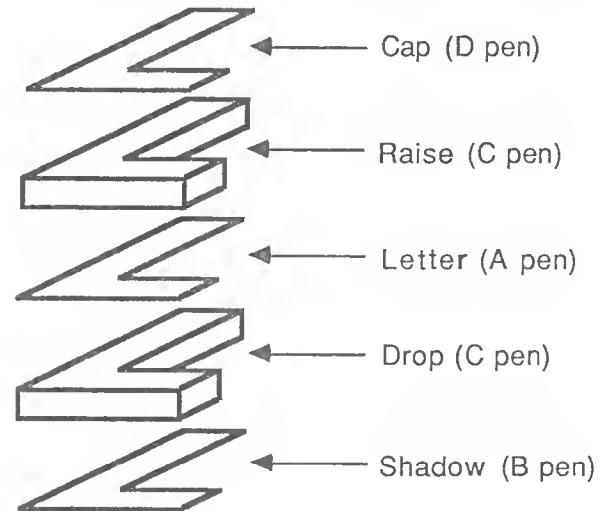

Figure 9.3 Style Layers.

You can choose any of the following from the **Colors** submenu to bring up the color palette for that pen:

■ **A Pen** - The color used for the main (letter) layer of a style. The Plain style uses this pen. The equivalent keyboard command is:

[F1]

■ **B Pen** - The color used for the shadow layer. This is also the beginning color in the color spread used when you smear the shadow. The equivalent keyboard command is:

F2

To turn the shadow layer into a color smear:

■ First, select the line of text and turn on the shadow layer by pressing the number 5 key in the numeric keypad.

■ While holding the CTRL key down, choose the desired direction key from the numeric keypad. A spread of colors will appear in the shadow layer. The first color is the selected color in the **B Pen** color palette.

■ Press the zero key in the numeric keypad as many times as necessary to add the next colors in the sequence, and the decimal key to subtract colors.

■ **C Pen** - The color used for the backdrop (drop) and raised portion of a style — 3D Block-A uses both these layers. This is also the beginning color in the color spread used by styles such as Fat Neon and Small Cross. The equivalent keyboard command is:

F3

■ **D pen** - The color used for the cap. The 3D Block-A style uses the cap layer — it's the thin outline on the front of the text. The equivalent keyboard command is:

F4

These conventions were established to make it easier for you to edit text colors; however, when you create your own styles, you can use any pen for any layer.

To change a pen color:

Note: You can change the color of on-screen text by selecting it before you choose a color pen.

■ Choose a pen from **A** to **D** from the **Colors** submenu in the **Edit** menu. That pen's color palette will appear.

■ Select the desired color and close the palette. Any text entered after you've selected a new color will use that color if its style uses that color pen. Any text entered before you chose the new color will not be affected. You can save your selections in a settings file.

By changing pen colors, the **A Pen** can be a different color for each line of text, the **B Pen** can be a different color, and so on.

The following is a quick reference of the default styles and the layers they use:

■ **Plain** - Letter (A pen).

■ **3D Block** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

■ **3D Block-A** - Cap (D pen), Raise (C pen), Letter (A Pen), and Drop (C pen).

■ **Thin Edge** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

■ **Fat Edge** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

■ **Thin Neon** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

■ **Fat Neon** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

■ **Outline Neon** - Cap (A pen) and Raise (C pen).

■ **Offset Edge** - Cap (A pen) and Letter (C pen).

- ■ **Emboss** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Small Cross** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Large Cross** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Small Star** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Large Star** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Outline** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Narrow** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Broad** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Broad Outline** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Spread Diagonal** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

- ■ **Spread Horizontal** - Letter (A pen) and Drop (C pen).

User Palette

Colors that look wonderful on the Amiga monitor don't always look good on regular television. For example, bright red tends to bleed. Choosing **User Palette** brings up a color palette whose colors were chosen according to how good they looked on t.v. The **User Palette** is also meant for use as your personal palette to make changes to.

VideoScape Palette

Choosing this brings up the color palette used by Aegis VideoScape 3D, a 3D modeling and animation program. By using the same color palette, you can create titles which you can load into VideoScape as IFF pictures.

ArtPak Palette

Choosing this brings up the color palette used by Aegis ArtPak, a clip-art package, including scenery, vehicles, animals, and so on, which you can cut out and use with VideoTitler. The palette was created by the artists at Sachs Enterprises as the best representation of real-world colors.

Clipboard Palette

Choosing this replaces the current color palette with the palette used by the image residing on the clipboard.

ColorText Palette

VideoTitler supports the use of "ColorFonts." Made by InterActive Softworks' The Calligrapher, ColorFonts are best described by the following excerpt:

InterActive Softworks is introducing a new type of text for the Amiga called ColorFonts™. While the standard Amiga text limits a Font to only 2 colors, foreground and background, ColorFonts enhances Amiga Fonts by allowing a text character to be any graphic image having 2 to 16 colors. Brushes from your paint program can be converted into Font characters. ColorFonts allows logos and other graphic images to be placed in a document with the ease of a keystroke.

*The only difference between standard Amiga Fonts and ColorFonts is the addition of colors. Standard 2-color Amiga Fonts can be created and modified with the Calligrapher. In addition, standard Fonts can be converted to ColorFonts. ColorFonts can be used with all Amiga software that support loadable Fonts and color. Commodore has approved ColorFonts as an Amiga Font standard. **

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* Ed Kilham, *The Calligrapher* (San Francisco: Interactive Softworks, 1987), p. 1:1.

The **ColorText Palette** menu command remains shaded
(inactive) until a ColorFont is installed in the **Amiga Font
Select** requestor. Then, when you type with a ColorFont, it
will appear in the colors it was made with when you choose
ColorFont Palette. Since you can have more than one
ColorFont installed and they can have different color palettes,
choosing **ColorFont Palette** will load the palette of the most
recently installed ColorFont. The **Taxi** font is one of several
ColorFonts provided on the data disk.

CHAPTER
10 THE DISPLAY MENU

Screen

Images on the monitor are made up of little squares of color
called pixels. The size and number of pixels making up the
screen display change when you choose a new resolution from
the **Display** menu.

The resolution is an indication of the fineness of detail you can
have. For example, fonts on a low-resolution display tend to
have jagged edges — called the "jaggies" — especially when
rendered in the Plain style. A higher-resolution screen contains
more pixels of a smaller size, eliminating that "blocky" look.

You can improve the vertical resolution by adding more rows —
called "scanlines" — of pixels, and the horizontal resolution by
adding more columns. For example, without overscan, **Lo-res**
is 320 columns by 200 rows and **Med-res** is 320 columns by
400 rows. **Hi-res**, the highest resolution, improves the
resolution in both directions. However, you pay for a higher
resolution with a reduction in memory and available colors.

Also, it takes longer for the screen to redraw. See Table 10.1 for a summary of the display options.

NTSC

OverScan	Off	Medium	Severe
Lo-Res	320x200	352x220	384x240
Video-Res	320x400	352x440	384x480
Med-Res	640x200	704x220	768x240
Hi-Res	640x400	704x440	768x480

Table 10.1   NTSC Screen Display Options.

Lo-res

This resolution requires the least amount of memory and is the default when you start VideoTitler. It also enables the fastest ANIM speed and the use of halfbrite. A palette of 32 colors (64 with halfbrite) is available.

Video-res

This doubles the vertical resolution of **Lo-res**, keeping the palette of 32 colors (64 with halfbrite).

The video "bandwidth" is defined by the number of colors available multiplied by the number of pixels (columns x rows). **Video-res** provides the highest bandwidth, making it the most functional for video recording. Granted, you could double the horizontal resolution by using **Hi-res**, but you would need more memory and your palette would be cut in half. Moreover, a higher horizontal resolution does not have much effect because of the poor resolution of the videotaping process.

Med-res

This is compatible with most Amiga software, such as Aegis Draw Plus and Aegis Images HR. This is not recommended for video work — although it has the same number of pixels as **Video-res**, it only has half the colors. Halfbrite is not supported.

Hi-res

This has the maximum number of pixels, providing the sharpest imagery; however, only 16 colors are available. The program functions, with the exception of a few, aren't any slower than for **Med-res**. Two megabytes of memory are recommended.

OverScan Off

Without overscan, a border surrounds the display. This is the normal mode for the Amiga.

OverScan Medium

This extends the display to the edges of the screen so that there's no border when viewed on regular t.v. This is the same overscan used in Aegis VideoScape 3D and other commercial products.

OverScan Severe

With medium overscan, a thin border may still appear around the edge of some screens. Severe overscan provides the maximum possible overscan on the Amiga. Because it slows down the Amiga, don't use severe overscan unless you really need it.

AEGIS VIDEOTITLER

Interlace

You'll notice that the display for either **Video-res** or **Hi-res** vibrates. This is because the video display is constantly being updated — like frames in a movie. Instead of having all 400 (with overscan: 440, 480) scanlines on the screen at once, every other scanline is sent to the screen every 1/60th of a second. This technique is called "interlace." The timing makes the display more compatible with video recording.

You can also turn on **Interlace** for **Lo-res** and **Med-res** displays. For example, if you have an Aegis ArtPak picture created in lo-res, **Interlace** will send each line of pixels to the screen twice. The result is that the dark lines in between will be filled, making the display look better on video.

HalfBrite

The Amiga 500, 2000, and early models of the 1000 have the "halfbrite" capability, which makes it possible to have twice as many colors on-screen at once, the second half being dimmer versions of the first half. When you turn on **HalfBrite**, another set of colors is added to the color palette. These are duplicates of the original colors, only they're half as bright — thus the term "halfbrite." Halfbrite is available for **Lo-Res** and **Video-Res** modes only. See Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu" for more on using halfbrite.

Note: If your Amiga 1000 doesn't support halfbrite, see your dealer about ordering the version of the Paula chip which has halfbrite, part number 8362, rev. 6 or rev. 8 — no earlier than rev. 6!

NTSC/PAL

The Amiga can transmit an NTSC signal in order to be compatible with regular television and video equipment. This is a standard set by the National Television Systems Committee for

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broadcasting in the U.S. Europe and Australia, on the other hand, use the PAL format. One obvious difference between the two is that in **Lo-res**, the PAL display has an extra 56 scanlines (see Table 10.2).

PAL

OverScan	Off	Medium	Severe
Lo-Res	320x256	352x276	384x296
Video-Res	320x512	352x552	384x592
Med-Res	640x256	704x276	768x296
Hi-Res	640x512	704x552	768x592

Table 10.2   PAL Screen Display Options.

VideoTitler determines which type of machine you have and automatically switches to that mode automatically upon startup. The **PAL** and **NTSC** choices let you override this should you want to work in the other format — useful for producers who must create titles for both. One suggestion is to clip pictures made in **NTSC** and convert them to **PAL** with a **Paste Full Screen**.

To change the screen display:

■ Pull down the **Screen** submenu from the **Display** menu.

■ Make all your choices at once by clicking on them with the Selection button. An **ATTENTION!!** requestor will appear, warning that the background will be erased.

■ Select **OK** to proceed.

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The Attention Requestor

You can bring up the **ATTENTION!!** requestor at any time by pressing the HELP key. This will show the amount of available memory and the width, height, and depth of the screen, in that order. Screen depth is measured in bit planes. The number of available colors is a function of the number of bit planes — halfbrite adds a sixth bit plane, thus more colors.

Special Background Effects

You can use any combination of these effects. Also, you can choose Undo to reverse the last action.

Quarter

Choosing **Quarter 1/4** makes a small duplicate of the background in the upper left quarter of the screen. Choosing **Quarter 4/4** puts the duplicate in all four quarters.

Invert

Choosing **Invert Horizontal** flips the background horizontally. **Invert Vertical** flips it upside down.

Mirror

Choosing **Mirror Horizontal** takes the left half of the background and mirrors it in the right half. Choosing **Mirror Vertical** takes the top half and mirrors it in the bottom half.

Compress

Choosing **Compress Horizontal** takes the entire background and compresses it in the left half. Choosing **Compress Vertical** takes the entire background and compresses it in the top half.

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Duplicate

Choosing **Duplicate Horizontal** takes the left half of the background and duplicates it in the right half. Choosing **Duplicate Vertical** takes the top half of the background and duplicates it in the bottom half.

APPENDIX A
THE COLOR PALETTE

The color palette, created by InterActive Softworks, displays the group of colors that are currently being used (you can press the F1 key to see a palette). The number of colors available depends on the screen resolution. The Amiga's halfbrite capability doubles this number, with muted versions of the original colors.

Note: If your Amiga 1000 doesn't support halfbrite, see your dealer about ordering the version of the Paula chip which has halfbrite, part number 8362, rev. 6 or rev. 8 — no earlier than rev. 6!

The little squares of colors in the palette are called "paint pots" rather than "colors." This is because a paint pot's location is more important than its color, which can change. For example, the paint pot in the top-left corner is "color 0" — whatever color is there will become transparent when Genlock hardware is used.

The order of colors is also important. For example, when a text style calls for a smear of different shades of a color, they must occupy successive paint pots. The sequence progresses from left to right, picking up at the left of each new row.
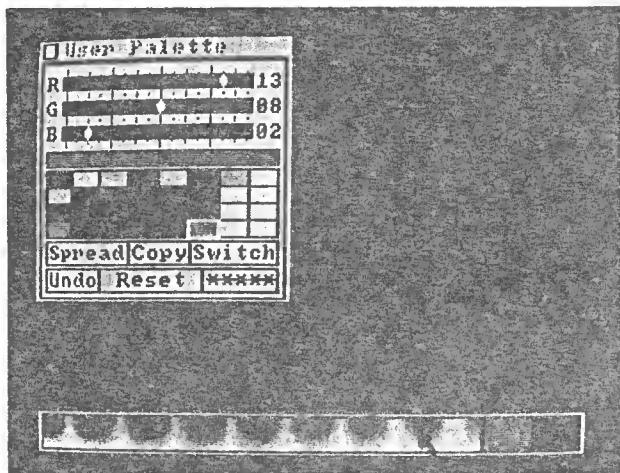
Figure A.1   The Color Palette.

Color Adjustments

You can change a paint pot to any one of the Amiga's 4096 colors. The color palette provides several ways to do this. However, plan ahead, because anything already on-screen, such as text or pictures, is permanently tied to the paint pot which created it. That is, if you change a paint pot's color, images created with that paint pot will also change to the new color.

The R-G-B Sliders

The three sliders at the top of the palette are for changing a color by adjusting its red, green, and blue components. Colors are represented in the Amiga by the numbers on the right. *Note: Halfbrite colors use the R-G-B values of their counterparts in the main palette.*

To use the R-G-B sliders:

▦ First, select the paint pot to be adjusted. The paint pot will be highlighted and the bar above the paint pots will change to that color.

▦ Drag the R-G-B sliders to get the desired hue — you can also click in the black area of the drag bar to pick the next closest shade. The numbers will change, as will the paint pot, color bar, and corresponding images on-screen.

The HAM Color Bar

"HAM" stands for "hold and modify," a routine that makes it possible to put all 4,096 colors on the screen at once. The color palette includes a HAM color bar to take the guesswork out of changing colors.

To use the HAM color bar:

▦ First, select the paint pot to be adjusted.

▦ Select the button with the asterisks. The HAM color bar will appear. The paint pot on the right represents the current color and the pot on the left is for the new color. Because you haven't made any changes, they will be the same.

▦ Either drag the cursor around the color bar until the left paint pot is the desired color, or click on a color with the Selection button.

You can zoom in one level at a time by clicking the Menu button on the bar, and zoom out by clicking the Selection button — don't release the button if you want to drag the cursor around. Once you're zoomed in, you can use the arrow keys to scroll around the color bar.

◼ Select either the left paint pot or the asterisks button to close the color bar and apply the new color to the palette. Select the right paint pot if you want to keep the original color.

Spread

The **Spread** function produces a range of colors between any two end colors. Many styles, such as Fat Neon, depend on a range of light and dark shades of a color for their effect. A color range is also required by the gradation options in the **Edit** menu.

To create a spread of colors:

◼ Select an end color for the range — it doesn't matter which end.

◼ Select **Spread**. The button will white-out to show the function is activated.

◼ Select the other end color. A range of colors will appear in between the two paint pots.

As mentioned earlier, a color's position in the palette is important. For example, the color spread used for text styles starts with the selected color in the **C Pen** palette and adds the next colors in the sequence of paint pots. Therefore, the color spread should come after the selected color instead of before it. See Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu," for a discussion of the color-pen palettes.

Copy

The **Copy** function copies a paint pot's color to another paint pot.

To copy a color:

◼ Select the color to be duplicated.

◼ Select **Copy**.

◼ Select the color to be changed. Both paint pots will contain the same color.

Switch

The **Switch** function exchanges the colors of two selected paint pots. This is useful for reversing a color spread.

To switch two colors:

◼ Select the desired color.

◼ Select **Switch**.

◼ Select the other color. The two paint pots will exchange colors.

Undo

Selecting **Undo** reverses the most recent adjustment to the color palette. For example, if you switched two colors, but aren't pleased with the result, the **Undo** function will switch them back.

Reset

The **Reset** function changes the palette back to the settings it had when you first opened it. You shouldn't confuse it with the **Undo** function, because it will undo all adjustments instead of just the most recent one. *Note: If the HAM color bar is open, click on an R-G-B slider before selecting Reset.*

When You're Done

After you've made your changes to the color palette, you can select the close box in the top-left corner to put it away. The changes will remain for the rest of the session (unless you open another color palette); however, you must save your changes before you quit. See Chapter 8, "The Project Menu," for information on saving color palettes.

APPENDIX B

INSTALLING VIDEOTITLER ON A HARD DISK

Follow these steps very carefully to ensure that you copy the correct files to your hard disk. It is assumed you are familiar with the CLI, described in the handbook accompanying your Amiga.

■ Start your Hard Drive by inserting its "boot disk."

■ Go into CLI.

■ Make sure a minimum of two megabytes is free on your hard disk.

■ Insert the VideoTitler program disk into the internal drive.

Note: These directories must be in the root directory of your hard disk, because this is the only directory where VideoTitler will look for them: devs, c, libs, and fonts. Also, they must contain all the commands that come with Workbench 1.2 (or greater).

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These directories are required for poly fonts and styles:

■ Type **Makedir DH0:VideoTitler** at the CLI prompt and press RETURN.

■ Type **Makedir DH0:VideoTitler/pfonts** and press RETURN.

■ Type **Makedir DH0:VideoTitler/shapes** and press RETURN.

■ Type **Makedir DH0:VideoTitler/faces** and press RETURN.

■ Type **Copy DF0:titler to DH0:VideoTitler** and press RETURN. This copies the VideoTitler program to the hard disk.

■ Type **Copy DF0:vseg to DH0:VideoTitler** and press RETURN. This copies the VideoSEG program to the hard disk.

■ Type **Copy DF0:pfonts to DH0:VideoTitler/pfonts all** and press RETURN. This copies the poly fonts to the hard disk.

These two steps copy the files necessary for rendering text styles to the hard disk:

■ Type **Copy DF0:faces to DH0:VideoTitler/faces all** and press RETURN.

■ Type **Copy DF0:shapes to DH0:VideoTitler/shapes all** and press RETURN.

■ Type **Copy DF0:devs/setdh0 to DH0:devs/.titler.** "Setdh0" is a special settings file that provides the necessary pathnames for accessing poly font files and such. It will be the default file when you run VideoTitler off the hard disk.

HARD DISK

■ Eject the VideoTitler program disk and insert the VideoTitler data disk.

■ Type **Copy DF0: to DH0:VideoTitler all** and press RETURN. This copies all the pictures, scripts and Amiga fonts to the hard disk — you'll need them for the tutorials.

Note: You may use an assign command to change the path for fonts (described in Appendix C, "Making a Font Data Disk"). Or you can complete the following steps.

■ Type **Copy DH0:VideoTitler/fonts to DH0:fonts all** and press RETURN. This moves the directory containing the Amiga fonts to the root directory, where VideoTitler can find it.

■ Type **Delete DH0:VideoTitler/fonts all** and press RETURN.

To run VideoTitler from the hard disk:

■ Type **CD DH0:VideoTitler** and press RETURN.

■ Type **titler** and press RETURN. The program will now load from the hard disk. VideoSEG will also load from the hard disk when you type **VSEG**.

APPENDIX C

MAKING A FONT DATA DISK

You may make additional data disks for more fonts. The only requirements for a font data disk are:

- It must contain a directory labeled **fonts.**

- The **fonts** directory must contain a directory for each font.

- Each font must have a "fontname.font" header file in the **fonts** directory. Header files are made automatically by programs that create Amiga fonts.

  For example, the diamond font would have a header file named **diamond.font** in the **fonts** directory, plus a directory named **diamond,** which contains the actual font files.

- The data disk must be in the external drive when you load VideoTitler, in order for you to use those fonts. However, you may edit the startup sequence to assign the fonts to another disk or directory.

To reassign the fonts directory:

- Use a text editor to open the file, **startup-sequence,** found in the s directory on the VideoTitler program disk.

■ Go to the line, assign fonts: df1:fonts, and change df1:fonts to the desired path. For example, dh0:VideoTitler/fonts. *Note: All Amiga fonts must be in a directory or subdirectory named fonts.*

Consult the handbook which came with your Amiga for information on using the CLI to create directories.

APPENDIX D
EXPERT MODE

When you turn on Expert Mode, you can change any of the 20 styles in the Text Styles requestor to create new ones. Expert Mode is deliberately "hidden" to prevent the bewilderment of the casual user; that is, you must enter a keyboard combination to turn it on. We recommend you understand the rest of the manual, especially the "Colors" section in Chapter 9, "The Edit Menu," before you attempt to create your own styles in Expert Mode.

To turn on Expert Mode:

■ While holding down both SHIFT keys, press the F10 key:

SHIFT   SHIFT   F10

An ATTENTION!! requestor will appear, warning beginners that this feature is for advanced users.

■ Press the RETURN key to proceed. Don't worry, Expert Mode won't hurt you! The requestor will disappear. You won't see anything else out of the ordinary until you bring up the Text Styles requestor.

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To edit a style:

- Press the F10 key to bring up the **Text Styles** requestor. A new button, **Edit Style**, will appear at the bottom of the requestor.

- Select the style you'd like to examine or change.

- Select **Edit Style**. The **Edit Text Style** requestor, which lists the layers used and their components, will appear (see Figure D.1). The components are described in the next sections — the best way to understand them is to experiment.

- Select the desired layers, **Cap**, **Raise**, **Letter**, and **Drop**, to turn them on. The selected buttons will become highlighted to show they're activated — they're highlighted if they're already in use.

- Type the desired information in the edit fields which contain tan characters. For example, you can type a new name in the **Style Name** edit field.

- Click repeatedly with the Selection button in the red edit fields until you select the desired settings.

- Select the close box. You will be returned to the **Text Styles** requestor. The new name (if you entered one) will appear in the highlighted button. The changes will be apparent when you apply that style to text. You can save your changes in a settings file.

  You can create a unique style for a line of text, without affecting the overall styles.

To edit the style of selected text:

- First, select the text.

- Press the F9 key. The **Edit Text Style** requestor will appear. Make the desired changes. They will apply only to the selected text.
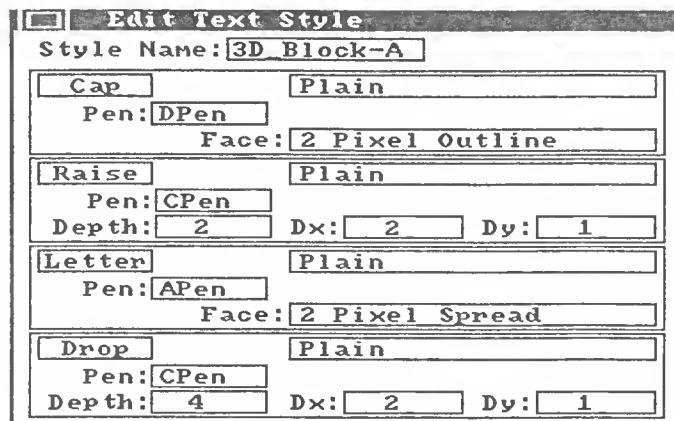
Figure D.1   The Edit Text Style Requestor.

Faces

In Figure D.1, the **Face** button in the **Cap** and **Letter** sections contain face file selections. A face file is used to apply a style to raw text. For example, **1 Pixel Outline** makes the text an outline one pixel wide (the number of pixels is doubled in higher resolutions).

Shapes

In Figure D.1, the top button in each layer's section contains shape file selections. The shape file determines how the text is drawn on the screen. Shape files are responsible for color spreads, cross and star effects, and so on.

3D Effects

In Figure D.1, the **Raise** and **Drop** layers contain edit fields for adjusting their angle and depth. **Dx** measures the offset in pixels in the horizontal direction — you can enter a negative number to reverse the direction. If it's zero, you won't be able to see that layer if you try to "view" it from the sides using the numeric keypad. **Dy** is the same as **Dx**, but for the vertical direction. If it's zero, you won't be able to view that layer from the top or bottom. **Depth** measures how many times that layer is repeated. If it's zero you won't be able to view that layer at all.

APPENDIX E

SHOWANIM

The VideoTitler program disk contains the Aegis/Sparta ShowANIM program. ShowANIM, which may be freely distributed, will play ANIM's created with any product that supports the ANIM format.

Note: ANIM's created in VideoTitler will only run on version 4.0 (or greater).

ShowANIM provides the following options for playback:

■ **-L#** - Non-continuous loop play, where # is the number of times to play. If you don't enter a number, the ANIM will run 1000 times.

■ **-C#** - Continuous loop play, where # is the number of times to play. If you don't enter a number, the ANIM will run 1000 times.

Note: Your ANIM must contain a two-frame overlap in order to run continuously. In other words, the first two frames must be the same as the last two frames. This applies even if the action depicted in the ANIM does not complete a cycle; otherwise, you'll see some clutter on the screen. When making an ANIM in VideoTitler, save the first two frames as IFF pictures which you can call up and record at the end.

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- ■ -B - Forwards/Backwards loop play.

- ■ +# - Timing between frames in jiffies, where # is the number of jiffies. A jiffy is 1/60 of a second; therefore, divide 60 by the number you entered to find out how many frames will play per second. For example, +6 is 10 frames per second and +2 is 30 frames per second, which is a good rate for video work.

To run ShowANIM:

- ■ At the CLI prompt, type **ShowANIM**, space, the desired option, and the filename. For example, if you wanted to run in a continous loop an ANIM named MyANIM, which was on a disk in df1:, you would enter: **ShowANIM -C DF1:MyANIM.**

- ■ Use CTRL-C to abort the ANIM.

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Developed by Gary Bonham

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Manual Addendum

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VideoTitler 3D – New Features

VideoTitler 3D allows PolyFont™ text to manipulated in three dimensions for stunning video titles. Coupled with the Lights!Camera!Action! program for special effects, the VideoTitler 3D package lets you create incredible title sequences directly from the Amiga computer, using the included PolyFonts or standard Amiga fonts. Even more than before, VideoTitler goes far beyond mere character generation, providing the titling power that until now required an expensive, dedicated titling system.

VideoTitler 3D is fully compatible with both Amiga WorkBench 1.3 and Amiga WorkBench 2.0, and runs on the full range of Amiga computers.

3D Effects:

- Move PolyFont titles smoothly in all three planes.
- Assign independent motions to different objects in the title.
- Extrude PolyFonts to instantly create "solid" or "shaded" 3D objects.

User Interface

- Curved paths may have sharp corners or smooth bends (called "Spline Nodes").
- VCR-style palette provides intuitive control of animation.
- "Overshoot" special effect allows animated titles to move past the defined end of their motion path and bounce back.
- Movable Text Entry Palette leaves text controls onscreen for greater user convenience.

New Menu Features

- Project Menu adds RecordRange and RecordRange Smear to handle keyframe animations.
- Text Menu adds 3D Reset and Shadow & 3D Extrude for 3D text handling.
- Animation-Activate command adds VCR controls to Text Palettes.

The 3D PolyFonts

For superlative special effects in your titles, you can turn to the PolyFonts. PolyFonts can be turned, distorted, and rotated in three dimensions, and have a host of special styles and shading possibilities. Unlike Amiga-standard fonts, PolyFonts are not limited in point size—they can be resized easily with the mouse, so the same font can be tall and thin, short and wide, or proportionately changed to any point size! PolyFont text lines can be manually kerned in large steps (5 units) or fine-kerned in 1-unit steps, but the PolyFonts are defined with **automatic pair-kerning** for beautifully-kerned text from the moment of entry.

Using the New VideoTitler Commands

Project, ANIM, RecordRange

Now you have the option to record a range of frames in your title sequence. Select RecordRange from the **ANIM** submenu under the **Project** menu to initiate the recording. The recorded range is the range of frames defined in the VCR-like controls under the Text Type Palette. To view or change the range, activate the VCR controls under the Text Type Palette (select **Animation, Activate**) and edit the beginning and ending frames of the range.

To record the frame range as an ANIM, first open an ANIM file (**Project, ANIM, Open ANIM**), then select RecordRange. Each frame of the range will be rendered on the screen as it is recorded. Remember to Close the ANIM file before you quit or sleep VideoTitler (**Project, ANIM, Close ANIM**).

Project, ANIM, RecordRange Smear

RecordRange Smear repositions items on the screen for each frame without erasing the previous positions. In the recorded ANIM, this will result in an interesting smearing of moving items across the screen. Experiment with this effect to see how it will be useful in your animations or titles—for example, a smeared range can help emphasize speed of motion.

Text Type Palette

A movable palette allows selection of Amiga fonts or PolyFonts for your titles. This palette appears automatically when you start the program, but it can be hidden by selecting **Hide Palette** from the **Animation** menu.

| VideoTitler 3D	
AmigaTxt	PolyTxt

You can bring up VCR-like controls beneath the text entry palette. These allow you to define the range of frames currently available for recording, play through the range one frame at a time or from start to finish, or view any selected frame. The VCR controls are activated with the **Animation, Activate** selection. (See below.)

Text Entry

Amiga text can be selected explicitly from the Text Type Palette (click **AmigaTxt**), or you can simply click anywhere on the screen to get the familiar text-entry crosshairs. Amiga text includes any of the Amiga-compatible commercial fonts now available.

PolyFonts are selected by clicking on the **PolyTxt** gadget in the Text Type Palette; or by selecting a default PolyFont with **[F7]** or **Text, PolyFont**, then selecting **Text, (PolyFont) Entry.** PolyFonts should be chosen if you will want to manipulate text in three dimensions. When PolyFont entry is selected, the text position is shown by a collapsed text box—simply begin entering text to expand the box.

Amiga Text Entry			
Font	Style	Edit	Shado
A Pen	B Pen	C Pen	D Pen
<< <|> >>	Render	T T T T	
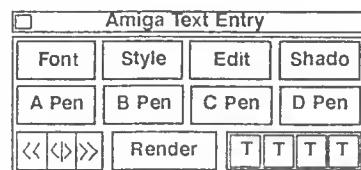
The Text Entry Palette, which appears when **Text, Entry** is selected or when either **Txt** gadget is selected from the Text Type Palette, contains the same set of text editing tools available from the menu under **Text, Defaults**;

Gadget Function

< <	Range Left of Crosshair Vertical.
< | >	Center Text on Crosshair Vertical.
> >	Range Right of Crosshair Vertical.
Render	Render Text in Selected Style—While text is being edited or moved, it is not rendered, but is displayed in the A Pen color.
T	Normal (plain) Text
T	Bold Text

T Italic Text
I Underline Text

Kerning Text

Whole lines of PolyFont text can be kerned using [Alt] plus the cursor keys for gross kerning (5 units) or the left and right cursor keys alone for fine kerning in 1-unit increments. VideoTitler allows stairstep-kerning as well as horizontal character-spacing—use [Alt]-[Up] to raise each character 5 units above the previous character in the line, [Alt]-{Down} to lower each character in a step-wise fashion.

Individual kerned pairs are pre-defined in the PolyFonts. Kerning is not available for Amiga fonts—the [Alt]-[Cursor] commands reset line justification for the Amiga fonts.

Text, 3D Reset

Restores X, Y and Z orientation of text to be parallel to the screen after it has been rotated.

Text, Shadow or Text, 3D Extrude

When you select **Shado** from the Text Entry Palette or the **Text, Shadow** menu option, the Shadow/Extrude window appears.

Shadow Type (the top box) defaults to OFF, with two other options, **2D** and **3D**. Selecting 3D enables the **3D Extrude** option in the second box, which also allows the user to select between Solid or Shaded (Color Smear). (Solid Shadow is the default.)

The **Depth:** gadget defines the "separation" between the Cap image and the Shadow image, while **3D:#:** is the number of planes in the extrusion of a 3D Extrude. The **2D:** gadgets define the position of a light source for the shadow.

If you have selected 3D Extrude, you have the further option to define the letter as **Solid** or **Shaded**. A Solid extrude is rendered in the defined number of planes, each in the selected extrusion color. A Shaded extrusion, however, uses three complete planes to form each of the defined extrusion planes, and the center plane of the three is rendered in the next color down in the palette from the extrusion color. The result is a subtle change in color as the extruded edge of the letter moves from vertical to horizontal. Shaded extrusions take longer to render, but provide an additional visual effect to enhance the 3D manipulation of text.

Animation Controls

Animation, **Activate** brings up a set of VCR controls which become active when the text has been entered. These controls perform the following functions.

```
┌─────────────────────┐
│ ☐    VideoTitler 3D  │
├──────────┬──────────┤
│ AmigaTxt │ PolyTxt  │
├──────────┴──────────┤
│ ◄◄ ◄▌  3    ▌▌ ▌► ►►│
├──────┬───────┬──────┤
│  1   │ PLAY  │  10  │
├──────┴───────┴──────┤
│ Frame Rate:  │  1   │
└─────────────────────┘
```
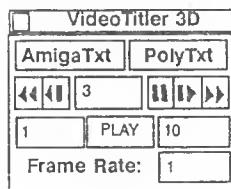
Middle row (first row of VCR controls)

Double arrow-left	Go to first frame in range.
Arrow-left/bar	Go back one frame.
Numeric value	Display current frame number.
Double bar	Render current frame.
Bar/arrow right	Go forward one frame.
Double arrow right	Go to last frame in range.

Bottom row (second row of VCR controls)

*Number on left	Set beginning of range (default is 1).
Arrow/PLAY	Render and display range.
*Number on right	Set end of range or animation length.

Items marked with the star (*) can be directly edited by placing the cursor and using delete, backspace, and number keys.

Editing the range allows you to fine-tune motions for one sequence of frames in a much-longer title sequence. You can look at as few as two frames at a time in the VCR Palette.

Text entry and placement overrides text rendering, so moved text will not be re-rendered until the render control (double bar) is selected.

Text Entry

With Text Entry Palette

Selecting **Animation-Activate** with the Text Entry Palette active adds the VCR controls to the standard Text Entry Palette, and adds 3 more controls not available in the VCR that attaches to the Text Type Palette.
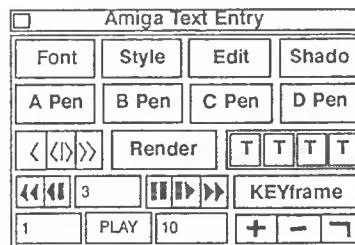
Plus sign (+)	Add or reset keyframe.	
Minus sign (-)	Remove keyframe.	
Right angle	Set keyframe as a sharp corner or a smooth curve called a spline node. You are limited to 30 spline nodes per animation.	

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ☐      Amiga Text Entry              │
├────────┬────────┬────────┬──────────┤
│  Font  │ Style  │  Edit  │  Shado   │
├────────┼────────┼────────┼──────────┤
│ A Pen  │ B Pen  │ C Pen  │  D Pen   │
├────────┴──┬─────┴──┬─────┴─┬──┬──┬──┤
│ ‹ ‹|›  ›› │ Render │ T │ T │ T │ T │
├───────────┼────────┼───────┴──┴──┴──┤
│ ◄◄ ◄▌  3  │ ▌▌ ▌► ►►│    KEYframe    │
├─────┬─────┼────┬────┼────┬────┬──────┤
│  1  │PLAY │ 10 │    │ +  │ -  │  ┐   │
└─────┴─────┴────┴────┴────┴────┴──────┘
```

Text Styles

|	
A Pen	This is the "top text" or **Letter** style.
B Pen	The B Pen color defines the **Shadow** of the letter.
C Pen	This is the color of the **Drop** or **Raise** portion of the letter.
D Pen	The D Pen is the color of the letter **Cap**, and is also used to denote an **animation keyframe**.

The PolyFonts™

PolyFonts are rotatable, resizable fonts included with your VideoTitler package. Unlike Amiga fonts, which can only appear in the exact point size you choose, and only parallel to the screen in a horizontal line, you can change the height or width of PolyFonts as desired, move them to a diagonal across the screen, or rotate them in three dimensions.

The 3D Handles

Each text "box" has eight handles located in the sides and corners of the box, a single handle in the center of the box, and three handles positioned slightly outside the dimensions of the box below the center bottom handle, below and to the right of the right-hand bottom corner handle, and right of the right-hand side center handle. These outside handles are the 3D, or rotation, handles. Rotated text pivots around the diamond-shaped handle at the lower left corner of the text box.

Rotate text in the plane of the screen with the outside corner handle. This rotation produces text which still faces the screen, but along a line other than straight horizontal. Click the rotation tool, then drag right for positive (clockwise) rotation, and left for counterclockwise.

The 3D Handles

Labels: Resize text, Skew text, Move text, Rotate in the vertical plane (horizontal rotation), Pivot point, Skew text, Resize text, Rotate in the horizontal plane (vertical rotation), Rotate in the plane of the screen (make text diagonal)
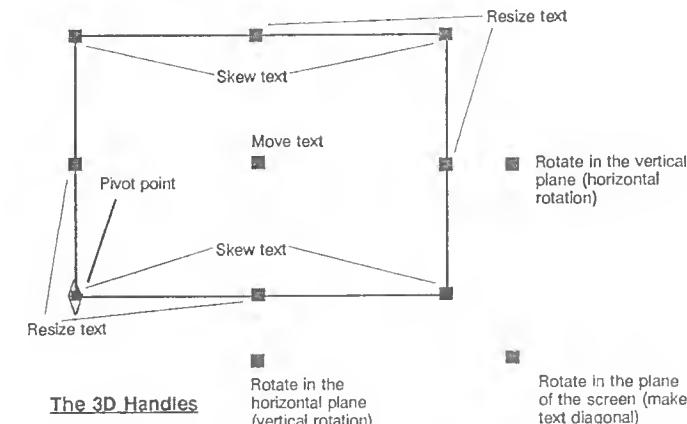
Rotate the text box horizontally by selecting the outside right handle. Moving the mouse to the right swings the right-hand edge of the text forward and the left-hand edge back, and creates the correct perspective in the rotated text.

Rotate the text box vertically by selecting the outside bottom handle. Moving the mouse to the right swings the lower edge of the text forward and the upper edge back, and creates the correct perspective in the rotated text.

Changing the Pivot Point

To rotate text around some other point than the lower left corner, enter the text, then hold down the Shift key while dragging the Move handle of the text box. The text will move in the plane of the text as it is currently rotated, but the pivot point will stay in place.

The most common place to move this pivot point is to the center of the text (where the Move handle is located), but the pivot does not have to exist within the text box. However, it is not wise to "cross the plane of the eye" with rotated text. This entails having the object rotate visually to a plane at the observer's eye, parallel to the screen. (Please see diagram.) When the point is visually located at A or C, the object will appear—but at point B, the perspective lines are at infinity. Text rotated past the vertical plane through the eye will appear mirrored.

——— Line of perspective to corner of screen
——— Line of perspective to point
 • Point displayed on screen
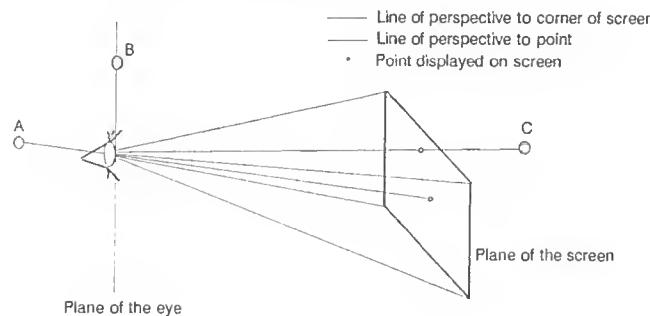
When text has been rotated into the plane of the eye (i.e., you are looking at the leading edge of the text box, straight down the plane of the text), strange things will happen to the boundaries of the text box. Text from the box may appear elsewhere on the screen, or seem distorted in ways that do not match the boundaries. **Do not let this text render**—rotate the box to move it out of the critical plane. When the perspective lines are at infinity, that program may seem to halt as it tries to calculate where the points in the plane should appear on the screen.

The VideoTitlerDefaults Program

Included with your VideoTitler program is a default-settings editor which makes it easy for you to change to settings you defined during installation. When you installed your program, one of the responses was to install Project files and icons and the **VideoTitlerDefaults** program. If you installed icons, you will have the editor in your VideoTitler directory.

Double-click on the editor icon to start it—a simple menu will appear which displays the current default settings. On the left is a table of string gadgets which allow you to set or reset the paths for PolyFonts, Shapes, Faces, Windows, and so forth. Some of these paths will be blank—this is normal. You can use the default editor to set paths for Windows and other files for which you may want a default path.

On the right side is a stack of buttons, each of which displays the current default settings for items such as resolution and overscan. Selecting a button brings up a menu from which you can select a new default value.

The final buttons, **Save** and **Cancel**, allow you to decide what is to be done with your selections. Save writes the new default settings into the S:.titler file, while Cancel, of course, aborts the changes.

Appendix A: Advanced Techniques

The changes described in this section are fairly technical, and will not be required by the majority of users.

Vertical Scrolls with Multi-View-Port Transitions

Using VideoTitler with Lights!Camera!Action and multi-view-port transitions, you can produce smooth vertical scrolling in titles for NTSC displays. (The Multi-view-port transition does not work well in PAL systems.)

In order to produce smooth scrolling, the ANIM should be recorded with horizontal word compression. To allow this, you can add the command

> DELTAWORD

as the second line of the VideoTitler settings file—this change can be made with any text editor. (**NOTE:** If DELTAWORD and DELTAXOR are both present in the VideoTitler settings file, whichever comes last is the one implemented.) Record your ANIM in **severe overscan**, then play it with Multi-View-Port Scroll Up or Down in the Lights!Camera!Action special effects generator. The resulting title animation is an ANIM-4 animation, and may not play in some ANIM-5 players.

Severe Overscan is required for smooth scrolling—but an interesting effect can be achieved by not using it. Without severe overscan, there is a pause between pages, and the next page will "push" the preceding page from the screen. A similar effect can be obtained by scrolling individual "windows" or brushes in Lights!Camera!Action!

"Ping-Pong" Replay

Some players allow an animation to be played both forward and backward, instead of simply looping forward over and over. To enable smooth backward play with these players, you can add the command

> DELTAXOR

as the second line of the VideoTitler settings file—this change can be made with any text editor. (**NOTE:** If DELTAWORD and DELTAXOR are both present in the VideoTitler settings file, whichever comes last is the one implemented.) DeltaXOr records the title animation in vertical compression for a smooth ping-pong effect.

Slow Paste with Full Tile

An interesting effect can be generated by distorting a rectangular brush slightly, then performing a Slow Paste with a Full Title. The Hearts sample on your distribution disk was created using the ProFills Heart brush, distorting it to a trapeziod, then tiling the resulting shape to fill the background.

Slow Paste is very slow—especially with high resolution—but the results can be worth the wait. The Hearts4 sample shows what can be done with a little more editing, all within VideoTitler 3D.

The Settings Files

The VideoTitler settings file is installed in the S: directory during the installation process, and is named .titler. In addition to the .titler file, each "project" icon carries this information. This allows each project to be edited separately for custom effects—or you can edit the master .titler file to make the compression settings automatic for all projects.

Both settings files are stored in plain ASCII text, and can be edited with a standard text editor. The .titler file can also be edited using the **VideoTitlerDefaults** program which has been included with VideoTitler 3D.

Appendix B: Technical Support

If you have any problems using VideoTitler 3D, don't worry. There is a simple process for solving your problem.

Decide exactly what the problem is.

Check the most obvious possibilities—is the source of the problem in the VideoTitler program? In Lights!Camera!Action! effects? Have you followed directions exactly?

Getting Ready to Call Technical Support

If everything seems to be right, but it's still not doing what it's supposed to do, you will want to call for technical support. Get your registration number ready—it will appear on the distribution diskette which came in your box. (Updated users may use their original registration number.) If you don't have this number, you will not be eligible for technical support. You can note your serial number here where it will be convenient:

• SERIAL NUMBER:_____

Have a clear picture of the trouble, and how you arrived at the problem point, in your mind. It may help to have a few notes ready.

Call for Help

Call us here at Oxxi for some technical help, at (213) 427-1227. Ask for VideoTitler technical support. Our technical support hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. You can also FAX us at (213) 427-0971.

When You Speak to the Technician

When the technician answers or returns your call, be ready to give your registration number and a brief description of your problem.

Listen carefully to what you are told. If there is anything you don't understand, say so—the concept will be explained in more detail. If the problem is extremely unusual, you may be asked to send the technician a copy of the files you are working on, with a step-by-step list of how the trouble arose.

The Purpose of Technical Support

The technicians are here to help you. Our technical support staff are all Amiga fans! You can call on their experience as required, to increase your enjoyment of our software and your Amiga computer.

Correspondence

When you send correspondence to Oxxi, please address it as follows.

Oxxi, Inc.
VideoTitler Technical Support
P O Box 90309
Long Beach, CA 90809-0309

To be eligible for updates or upgrades, please fill out and return your registration card as soon as possible.

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